

*D.S. Davidson*

ANTHROPOLOGICAL PAPERS

OF THE

American Museum of Natural  
History.

Vol. XI, Part VI.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION, CULTS, AND CERE-  
MONIES OF THE PLAINS-OJIBWAY AND  
PLAINS-CREE INDIANS.

BY

ALANSON SKINNER

NEW YORK:

Published by Order of the Trustees.

1914.

# American Museum of Natural History.

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(Continued on 3d p. of cover.)

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POLITICAL AND CEREMONIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE  
PLAINS-OJIBWAY.

BY ALANSON SKINNER.



## INTRODUCTION.

The Plains-Ojibway, or the Bûngi, as they call themselves, are a small Algonkin group occupying several reservations in southern Manitoba, notably Long Plains on the Assiniboine River near Portage La Prairie, and Swan Lake. Some of them are also at Turtle Mountain in North Dakota, but whether or not all of the Turtle Mountain Ojibway are connected with the Bûngi is not satisfactorily apparent. Apparently the Bûngi were originally part of the great Ojibway tribe, as they speak a dialect of that language. They now consider themselves distinct from the Ojibway, comparing their relation to that tribe with the relationship of the Assiniboine to the Sioux. They do, however, refer to their language as "Odjibwe."

The separation of the Bûngi from the Ojibway must have been in relatively recent times, probably not long prior to the first advent of white traders in the country. That they were already established on the Assiniboine River when the whites first met them seems more probable than that they formed one of the more eastern bands of Ojibway urged westward by the traders. Alexander Henry the younger, apparently refers to this group when he states in his journal <sup>1</sup> for August 19th, 1800:

This afternoon a few Indians arrived on horseback. They came from the direction of Portage La Prairie, and were of the tribe called Snakes, who formerly inhabited Lake of the Woods. They once were numerous but now cannot muster more than 50 men. They may be said to be of the same nation as the Crees, but have a different dialect, somewhat resembling the Saulteur language. They are a thieving set of scoundrels. They now inhabit a tract of land upon the Assiniboine, about 30 leagues west from this place, and some of them are to be found almost all over the country where there are Saulteurs or Crees.

In another place Henry adds: <sup>2</sup> "N. B. The Ogeebois are commonly called by the English Algonquins, by the Canadians Saulteurs, and by the H. B. Co. servants Bungees." There seems to be no reference to them whatever in the writings of Alexander Henry, the elder. Whether or not the Bûngi may later be found identical with the Plains-Ojibway or Saulteaux proper, as seems probable, we shall for the purpose of our paper look upon them as an independent group. Henry Youle Hind <sup>3</sup> refers to them as "Bungays" as distinct from the Ojibway and Cree, and calls them a mixture of both tribes.

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<sup>1</sup> Henry and Thompson, Vol. 1, 46.

<sup>2</sup> Henry and Thompson, 533.

<sup>3</sup> Canadian Red River and Assiniboine and Saskatchewan expeditions, Vol. 1, p. 333 (1857-8).

According to their own account the Bûngi have intermarried to some extent with the Cree, Ojibway, Assiniboine, and, some generations ago, with the Ottawa. Probably the band with whom Tanner was affiliated supplied this strain. Of late years they have associated with their ancient enemies the Sisseton and Santee-Sioux, a band of whom, refugees from Minnesota after the Minnesota massacre, are now settled about three miles from Portage La Prairie. At the close of the eighteenth century there was also a small Iroquois colony on the Red River, not far distant, with whom the Bûngi no doubt came in contact.

Taking these facts into consideration we find that we seem to have an Algonkin tribe which was formerly resident in the Woodlands, and which may be supposed to have had a typical forest culture, which has moved out beyond the border of plains, presumably of its own volition, in pursuit of the buffalo.

The information offered here was obtained in the summer of 1913 on the Long Plains Reserve, Manitoba, from Ogimáuwinini, Cenuwigabo', Nénawigabo', Piziki, Tobacco, Joe Countois, Joe and Dauphin Myron and others. Some supplementary data were also gathered on the Cowesses and Sakimay Reserves, Saskatchewan, from Saulteaux resident there. The writer has taken pains to specify whenever this Saulteaux material is given, feeling that the Bûngi may after all have more cultural differences from the Saulteaux than are now recognized.

The writer wishes to express his gratitude to Mr. Duncan Campbell Scot, Rev. W. A. Hendry, and Mr. Edwin Boak, for their courtesy and kindness in assisting the expedition in every possible way.

March, 1914.



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## CAMP ORGANIZATION.

The Bûngi were formerly divided into several local bands, each one of which derived its name from the locality which it inhabited. In more recent times at least, some of the bands were called after their chiefs, witness "Yellow Quill's band," now on the Long Plains Reserve. This, however, seems to be an innovation due to white contact. The following bands, each of which had its chief, were recognized by the Bûngi.

Mistowaiiau-wininiwûk	Winnipeg men
Wûnikaming-wininiwûk	Bay or Portage men
Moswatcing-wininiwûk	Moose Mountain men
Kipaukaning-wininiwûk	"Qu'Appelle" men
Ninantakau-wininiwûk	Cypress Hills (?) men
Mitigwatei-wininiwûk	Forest (?) men
Saganatci-wininiwûk	?
Mostapikau-wininiwûk	?

Besides these larger divisions, the Bûngi, like the forest Ojibway from whom they sprang, were further divided into various exogamic totemic groups with descent in the male line. Members of each of these gentes were distributed throughout the various bands. The gentes still remembered at Long Plains are: —

catfish (awasi)	snake
rattlesnake (cicikwe)	moose
beaver	bear
sturgeon	martin (wabpisis)
raccoon	crane (great blue heron?)
loon	elk
rabbit	thunderbird

At Cowesses Reserve, Saskatchewan, blue jay (okiskimanisi) and eagle were added to the list.

An attempt was made to get several genealogical tables in order to ascertain in how far the statements of the Indians with regard to the theory of their totem system worked out in practice. It was found to be very difficult to gather data on this subject, inasmuch as the Bûngi are nowadays inclined to disregard the rules and no historical account of the totems of the women in olden times could be gathered. A brief list was obtained however, at Long Plains.

## OGIMÁUWININI'S LIST

<i>Name</i>	<i>Relationship</i>	<i>Totem</i>	<i>Wife's Totem</i>
?	Great grandfather	Awasi	?
Kitimekutewimewe or (Big Black robe)	grandfather (an Ottawa)	Awasi	?
	father	Awasi	Cicikwe
Ogimáuwini (chief man)	<i>informant</i>	Awasi	Awasi <sup>1</sup>
"Charlie Assiniboin"	son	Awasi	?
Money-boy	grandson	Awasi	unmarried

According to one informant, Sewekûmikûk, an old woman on the Cowesses Reserve, Saskatchewan, the members of the various gentes pitched their lodges together when a band was encamped, but not in any rotation. All were unanimous that no one gens was considered more important than another, nor could it be learned that any gens possessed any specific rites or properties differentiating it from any other.

In olden times the Bûngi camped in a circle. There was no systematic arrangement of the lodges in the camp, but the more important and influential families tried to get as close to the chief as possible. However, it was largely a matter of first come, first served. When the entire tribe came together each band camped by itself, but there was no regular sequence.

The general council was composed of those accredited warriors, or okitcitak, who had achieved one or more of the recognized deeds of valor, to be enumerated later, according to Nenawigabo'. These men selected the chief, who was a man chosen because of his superior bravery, generosity, and wisdom. In other words, an aspirant to the chieftaincy had to have deeds of valor to his credit, he must have been poor because he had given away all his worldly goods, and he must have had a reputation for common sense.

## THE OKITCITA.

In addition to forming the council, the okitcitak (singular, okitcita) or, "strong-hearted men," maintained order in the camp and regulated the buffalo hunt. Ogimáuwini, himself an okitcita, declared that twenty was the proper number of okitcita, or "soldiers," and that they were chosen by the chief, but according to Dauphin Myron and Nenawigabo', the number was only limited by the abundance of worthy warriors. Age was not a factor.

<sup>1</sup> When I was about to ask the old man what totem his wife had had, my interpreter begged me to desist, promising to explain later. Afterwards he told me that it was an old scandal that Ogimáuwini had married into his own totem, and that he was generally condemned by his people for this unusual breach.

In spite of the statement by Ogimáuwinini to the effect that the okitcita were appointed to serve, he later contradicted himself and added that under certain circumstances a warrior might automatically become an okitcita. For instance, when two opposing forces were drawn up on the prairie, two men might ride forward from the Bûngi ranks and halt midway between the rival factions. They would taunt the enemy and challenge two of their number to mortal combat with knives. If one of the men was worsted and turned to flee, it was permissible for his opponent to shoot him in the back, otherwise only hand weapons were used. If a warrior were victorious in such a duel, he became an okitcita at once.

On the other hand, the popular conception of the okitcita among the Bûngi, Ogimáuwinini to the contrary, is that any man, woman, or child, performing an act of valor thereby tacitly became an okitcita, and so remained for life, unless he wished to resign.

The recognized deeds of valor were: —

Slaying an enemy: A warrior achieving this honor was privileged to wear a plain eagle feather, white for a man, black for a woman.

Counting coup (one of the first four to strike an enemy, dead or alive, with the hand or a hand weapon): For this a man gained the right to wear an eagle feather stripped in front as in Fig. 1.

Taking a scalp: This deed was equally valued with the preceding, and bore as its reward the same honor feather.

Wounded in battle (naicwagen): For this an eagle feather painted red, trimmed, and notched on both sides (Fig. 1) was granted.<sup>1</sup>

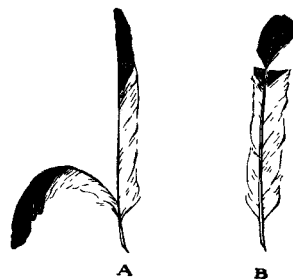


Fig. 1. Eagle Feathers worn to symbolize War Honors. *a*, Worn by one of the first four to strike an enemy; *b*, Worn for a wound received in battle.

<sup>1</sup> Referring to Odjibwe an Ojibway warrior at White Earth, Minnesota, Frances Densmore (62) remarks:

"Odjib'we's prowess won for him the right to wear 11 war-honor feathers, each indicating that he had taken a Sioux scalp; these were eagle feathers and were worn upright in a band around the head. . . . Three of the feathers are notched, and the right to wear these was acquired by killing and scalping Sioux; the unnotched feathers indicated that he had scalped Sioux who had been killed by other warriors. The dots of rabbit skin on the feathers indicate the number of bullets in his gun at the time of securing the scalp. Bits of once bright ribbon are at the tip of each feather. Odjib'we stated that 'four feathers could be counted for the death of each Sioux; one was worn by the man who killed him, one by the man who scalped him, and the others by men who assisted in the scalping'."

It would seem that the war honors in vogue among the various bands of the Ojibway and their neighbors differ locally. The writer has collected data on the honor count of the Wahpeton Sioux, and feels that the Sioux and Ojibway have greatly influenced each other in this regard. Further accounts are given by Miss Densmore, who says that because he caught a wounded Sioux by the arm, Odjib'we was entitled to wear a skunk skin badge on his right arm (71). A'kiwën'zi kicked two dead Sioux and consequently acquired the right to wear skunkskin attached to his ankles (86).

**Stealing a picketed horse:** There was some controversy among my informants as to whether this was a first class deed of valor. Some of them considered it not quite in the same category as the other deeds, though a brave act. However, the consensus of opinion seemed to be that it was equally creditable.

**Giving great presents:** A man who beggared himself by giving presents might become an okiteita.

**By purchase:** A man might go to an old okiteita and buy his regalia at a great price, thus becoming an okiteita himself. I could not learn, however, that this act deprived the vendor of his status as a warrior. For instance, having purchased the insignia of Ogimáuwinini, he informed me that I was then an okiteita, but next day I found him at work making new paraphernalia.

Besides the regalia mentioned in connection with the above listed war honors, warriors who were successful spoilers of the enemy's horses painted horses' tracks on their tents and garments. They also made transverse marks on their sleeves to the number of times that they had been to war or on horse-stealing excursions. Fig. 2 shows a design copied from a crayon portrait of an old okiteita, a relative of Dauphin Myron, who died about 1905. In this, *a* represents a camp circle of the enemy, *b* the lodges of the enemy, *c* hoof prints of stolen horses. The whole signifies that the owner had often visited the camp circles and lodges of the enemy and had stolen many horses.

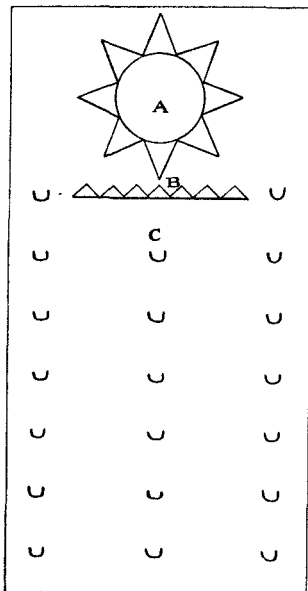


Fig. 2. Symbolic Design on a Plains-Ojibway Breechclout. *a*, A camp circle; *b*, The lodges of the enemy; *c*, Hoofprints of stolen horses.

side, was painted an armed Sioux, for the old man had wounded two Sioux during his life.

The story of the way in which Ogimáuwinini obtained his first war honors he gave as follows: —

When the Eastern Sioux first fled from Minnesota to Portage La Prairie, after the Minnesota massacre, Ogimáuwinini went to visit them, riding on a spirited pony. He had not been in the village long, talking and gambling with the young men, when the chief sent a messenger with tobacco to him asking him to come at once to his tipi. When he arrived the chief filled and lighted a red stone pipe which he gave him to smoke, and then warned him that his fine horse would tempt the youths and advised him to go. This Ogimáuwinini refused to do, striking himself on the chest and exclaiming, "I am a man." He then left the chief and spent the rest of the day with the young warriors.

After nightfall, he withdrew a short distance from the village, hobbled his pony, and tied to his wrist a buffalo hair rope, which was twisted about its jaws. He then rolled up in his blanket and went to sleep. About midnight, when the moon was high, the horse snorted and woke him. By the light of the moon Ogimáuwinini could see a number of armed Sioux crawling towards him. Afraid to stand upright lest they see him and shoot him down, he also crawled in their direction and met the foremost Sioux, a powerful man, face to face. They sprang at each other's throats and grappled, the Sioux seizing him by both shoulders. (Hence the red hands afterwards painted on Ogimáuwinini's shirt).

After a considerable struggle Ogimáuwinini managed to loosen his tomahawk and strike the Sioux over the head. The Sioux fell down and escaped, wounded, with the rest of his party. Ogimáuwinini spent the rest of the night expecting a second attack, but, when none materialized, he went to the chief in the morning and gave him tobacco, recounting the incident. The chief sent out a crier and soon had all the youths of the camp in his presence, where he scolded them for their lack of hospitality, and presented them with a pipe. The young man who was wounded, and his relatives, were conspicuously absent, so the chief warned Ogimáuwinini to flee lest they seek vengeance.

This story proves the assertion by the other members of the camp that it was not necessary for a man who had achieved a war honor to be appointed an okitcita, Ogimáuwinini himself admitting that he had never received such an appointment, although he considered himself an okitcita, and was provided with soldier regalia.

The okitcita formerly carried canes or wands from which the bark was peeled away at intervals, and the wood beneath was daubed with white paint or vermilion. Each painted ring signified a war or a horse-stealing expedition. Okitcita leaders bore straight staves ornamented with eagle feathers. These were formerly lances furnished with metal points. These lances were also used in striking coups. The leaders also carried hollow bone whistles.

#### WOMEN AS OKITCITA.

Women have often achieved great fame as warriors. Sometimes, when a man went to war, his wife would insist on accompanying him, and sometimes she was lucky enough to succeed in obtaining a war honor before the

return of the party, in which case she received the customary feather insignia but never wore them herself, designating one of her male relatives, preferably a son or grandson, to wear it for her. She was also called by the title *okitcitakwe*, or "Okiteita woman."

An *okitcitakwe* was entitled to go to the soldiers' tent at any time when the warriors were dancing, and to join them, dancing by herself at one side. When the warriors reenacted their valorous deeds, and counted their coups, she was entitled to do the same, and her narration was received with the same respect. She might not remain in the tent over night, however.

A Bûngi woman stated that her husband had seen a Cree woman, who was allowed to abide in a soldiers' tent with the men as a reward for some brave deed and later some Cree assured me that the head *okiteita* might keep his wife in the lodge. Of *okitcitakwe*, at least two still survived at Long Plains last summer (1913). One of these, *Cinoskinige*, obtained her title in this manner: —

She always went out with the warriors, and on one occasion when a Sioux was shot from his horse, she ran to count coup upon him. Being a woman she was outstripped in the race by three men, but succeeded in striking the fourth coup, killing the Dakota with her turnip digging-stick. The men then scalped him, and she painted her face with his blood.

Another renowned old woman at Long Plains was out with a party who were digging turnips on the prairie. They were attacked and surrounded by Sioux who rode round and round them, firing. The men fought them off, while the women hastily dug a rifle pit to conceal the party. In the meantime the men were all wounded. The pit being finished, this woman crept out under fire and rescued each of the men, dragging them back to the pit. In this manner she became an *okitcitakwe*.

#### THE SOLDIERS' TENT.

The *okiteita* were provided with a huge tent called "*okiteita okamik*" (Fig. 3) upon which were emblazoned their warlike exploits and in which they dwelt while the band was encamped together when the camp circle was made. The materials for making this tent were simply confiscated from the ordinary tribesmen by the *okiteita*, according to some informants; others claimed that each lodge voluntarily contributed a pole or a skin, at least during the tribal encampments when all the bands were together and when the *okiteita* from each band lived together in one mammoth long tent with doors at the ends.



In this connection, it is further said, that when the Cree or Assiniboiné camped with the Bûngi there was one great camp circle, one half of the circumference being made up of one of the two tribes. Two soldiers' tents, one for each tribe, were erected. Testimony conflicted as to whether the tents were placed with the others, or in the center of the camp circle. I believe the preponderance of evidence favored the latter.

The soldiers' tent was presided over by the band chief, but in a tribal camp he was superseded by the tribal chief who held his office simply through the superior power of his band or following, or, his own personal magnetism and reputation for prowess and wisdom. In any case, the chief lived in the soldiers' tent because he was neces-

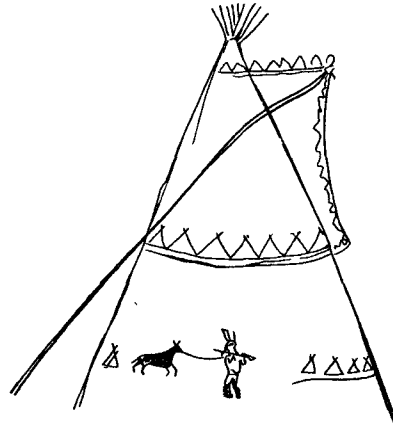


Fig. 3. The Okitcita Tent.

sarily an okitcita before he could attain his office. In a tribal camp the band chiefs became a sort of council to the tribal chief. Some of my informants, including Nenawigabo' and Dauphin Myron, after considerable controversy among themselves, finally decided that among the rank and file of the okitcita those who had achieved the greatest number of war honors were looked upon as leaders, but that the only definite officers were the band and tribal chiefs. I am inclined to believe that this decision is correct, judging by the information which was given me at the time of the debate.

Those who had struck coups, at least, as well as the band chiefs, were provided with feathered lances and eagle bone whistles. They were always supposed to precede the party when going to war, either mounted or on foot, and when the battle began they drove their lances into the earth and blew on their whistles to obtain supernatural assistance. They were supposed to hold their ground provided their party was overwhelmed. They might advance, but for a spear carrier to flee was infinitely more dishonorable than death. The no-flight idea was held by all the okitcita, as will be shown later in this discussion, but was particularly strong among the spear carriers.

One of these spears, once the property of Ogimáuwinini, was obtained. It is straight, terminating in three prongs, and is cloth-wrapped and hung with feathers as was another seen at Long Plains. There seemed some doubt

as to whether the curved lance or wand was ever carried, although some of the younger men affirmed this.<sup>1</sup>

In the soldiers' tent, another functionary, who served as assistant to the okitcita, was always found. He was a young man approved by the okitcita council, that is, the band and tribal chiefs in a tribal camp, or, the band chief and the soldiers in a band camp. He was hired to act as *skaupéwis*, or servant, which was considered a great honor. It was the servant's duty to care for and fill the soldiers' pipes and pass them about. He would cut tobacco upon a board, fill and light the pipe, and hand it to the chief who would smoke and pass it. It was also his duty to fan the okitcita with an eagle feather fan. In addition, it was his task to feed the warriors.

The wives or female relatives of the inhabitants of the soldiers' tent prepared food, which they brought to the lodge. They might enter with it, but were immediately relieved of their burdens and dismissed by the servant. The *skaupéwis* next took the food, cut the meat into convenient morsels, skewered them one by one on a stick (this stick was about three feet long, and decked with feathers), and fed his masters, placing the meat in their mouths. This was the regular procedure at every meal. The *skaupéwis* also performed all tasks, for it was considered a disgrace to the tribe to let an okitcita work.

The okitcita tent alone was furnished with the triangular willow stick backrests found more generally in use among other Plains tribes. Over these were flung entire robes of buffalo hide, with the heads and horns left on them. They were so draped that when an okitcita lounged back, the head of the buffalo robe fell over his head and he appeared to be horned. This was the regular position assumed, said *Nenawigabo'* and *Joe Countois*, when all were smoking together.

#### OKITCITA PRIVILEGES.

The okitcita had certain privileges which they were granted in consideration of their office. For instance, on his return from a successful war party, a man might marry at once, no matter how many wives he already possessed.

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<sup>1</sup> In speaking of the Ojibway on the White Earth Reserve, Minnesota, *Frances Densmore* (91) says, "Part of the equipment [of a war party] was provided by the leader, who also borrowed the 'banner' or 'flag' borne by the war party. This was made of eagle feathers sewed on a strip of cloth about 4 feet long, which was fastened lengthwise to a pole. *Odjib'we* stated that in the old days he knew of only one such banner among the Mississippi Band of Chippewa, made by a man named *Gagáíwígwún'* ('raven feather') and loaned to the war parties. It was considered the common property of the warriors, but this man was its custodian in time of peace, and it was preserved in his family after hostilities ceased." Plates of this and a similar banner used at *Wabácfíg* are shown. These banners are apparently related to the okitcita staves.

On the other hand, the custom of changing the name as a war honor did not exist. Inasmuch as the okitcita functioned as camp police, becoming such automatically as soon as the camp was collected, they were exempt from blood vengeance. In fact they were permitted to kill anyone who resisted their commands or offended them. They were excused from all labor, as has been pointed out before. They had their own songs and dances during which they recounted their coups, according to Nenawigabo' and Joe Countois. Ogimáuwinini, on the other hand, declared that they were obliged to hire some outsider, who had supernatural sanction, to give dances for them in which they took part. He added that sometimes they would hire someone to get up a lacrosse game that they might either watch or play in it.

#### OKITCITA DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS.

On the other hand, there were certain duties or obligations which devolved upon the okitcita. The okitcita were usually expected to undergo torture during the sun dance, though it was not demanded of them. They were bound to be camp police and stop all trouble, making it a point of honor to advance on quarreling parties, even though threatened or fired upon. On the other hand, if armed at the time the squabble broke out, the okitcita might summarily execute those who were disobedient. Quarreling of a serious nature was stopped by running out with a pipe which was held by the bowl and thrust between the wranglers, when it was revolved so that the stem was offered to all the points of the compass, to zenith and nadir. After this the contestants were obliged to cease and submit to arbitration. The officers of the okitcita who bore the feathered lances, or as Joe Countois added, crooked staves, were considered special peace officers. It is said that they might stop a quarrel without the pipe by thrusting their lances in the ground between the participants.

The following story was told by Ogimáuwinini to demonstrate the powers of the okitcita as peace officers. A warrior once asked another what was the most useful of all things to man: a gun, a horse, water, or fire. The other man replied, "Only one thing is the best, and it is none of these." Some of the bystanders said all things were equally good, but the original propounder of the question said that a horse was best of all. Another man spoke up, and said that a gun was quite as good as a horse. "For," said he, "you cannot live without help, even if you have a horse." The other got angry and replied, "A gun is worthless." "All right," replied the man who favored the weapon, "go and get your horse and I will get a gun and we will see which is the best."

Each ran to his tent, and in a few moments they came out prepared to fight, but, in the meantime, the okitcita had heard of it, and they came between the two parties, ordering them to cease quarreling. They rebuked the man who spoke in favor of the gun, saying, "You know well enough that this would be murder, the other man has no chance."

An obligation rather than a duty on the part of the lance bearers was generosity. Immediately on the return from a war party such a man would publicly give away all the horses and trophies he had captured, thus acquiring great renown. Others than the leaders were privileged to do the same, but, it is said, seldom availed themselves of the right.

In the old time camps, as we have said, the tents were pitched in a great circle, which in later years was itself surrounded by a ring of Red River carts, the horses being herded between the carts and the lodges. Four okitcita were delegated each night to guard these, and they were ordinarily supposed to challenge all comers once, and then shoot to kill. When there was danger of horse thieves or a night attack, the challenging feature was dispensed with, and the chief sent a crier on horseback through the camp to warn the people, especially to forbid the youths to go courting after dark.

#### FUNCTIONS OF THE OKITCITA IN WAR.

Generally war was declared by sending a runner with tobacco to each camp and band bearing the message; but this procedure was rare, most war parties being small semi-private enterprises. Only those who had propitious dreams could call a war party. A long lodge was built, offerings to the gods, especially the thunderbirds, were hung up in it, and the war songs were sung. The party never started off in the daytime, but always at night, usually just before dawn. Often they went naked and on foot, armed only with a knife, and supplied with many pairs of moccasins and some dried meat. Their idea in starting off on foot was that they would ride back on horses stolen from the enemy.

The leader of such a war party, which was usually small, and hardly ever exceeded one hundred members, was often, if not always, a tried okitcita, who indulged in shamanistic practices. At night he would cover his head with his blanket and order all the party to do the same; he was then supposed to have the power to see what lay before them on their journey, as plain as though it were daylight. He then prophesied, telling just where the party would meet the enemy, and whom they would see first. He would announce that the enemy would be beaten, for the Great Spirit helped him, or if he should see a black cloud approaching, he would suggest that the party turn back, as this was a sure sign that they would lose.

The party was always preceded by scouts, famous runners always being selected. These led the van by about ten or fifteen miles. The scouts being necessarily brave men, were usually okitcita. While in service they wore headdresses of grass to conceal them the better when they lay flattened out on the prairie. Those who had successfully served as scouts were entitled to wear a similar grass headdress while in the soldiers' tent. Ojimáwinini said that once, while hunting, he saw five of the enemy disguised in this manner, but escaped and warned his people in time for them to flee. If a scout saw danger ahead he would return, zigzagging as he ran, to warn the party. Sometimes, when on a horse-stealing raid rather than a war party, the scouts would crawl right into the enemy's herd and choose the best steeds with which to flee. On a party out for blood they would cover themselves with their robes, and, so muffled up with them that they could not be recognized, they would enter the camp, mingle with the enemy, noting everything, and then slip away to inform the others.

Dauphin Myron's grandfather went out with a horse-stealing party. He and his two brothers went ahead as scouts. They reconnoitered around a Sioux camp all night intending to return to their party before dawn. Dauphin's grandfather being very tired, he lay down on the prairie just across the river from the enemy's camp and fell asleep. When he awoke it was already daylight and his companions were gone. Across the creek he could see women moving about, engaged in their daily tasks, so he dared not stir. He was obliged to lie still, although naked, and endure the rays of the hot sun all day.

One of the women noticed his red breechclout, stared at it for a while, and then called to others who gathered around and began to point and gesticulate. Finally, they called out a man. He looked at it, laughed, and then they all went away. After nightfall the scout got up and returned to his party who came back with him and stampeded all the horses. Long afterwards he met the Sioux warrior whom the women had called out to look at him. The Sioux told him that he had assured the women that the red patch had been lying there in the grass ever since they had camped at that place. The Bûngi name for a scout is n'dowatu and it is considered a very honorable title.

The following war story was told by Joe Countois and illustrates the custom of a war party leaving something behind by which the identity of the tribe striking the blow might be apparent to the victims. On one occasion a Blackfoot war party attacked the Bûngi, killing a girl and leaving stuck in her head a tomahawk which had marks on it betraying the identity of the marauders. The next summer a party of Bûngi carried the tomahawk to the Blackfoot and did the same with them. The following year it

came back, carried by a Blackfoot war party, and this happened for several years in succession. The fourth time it never came back. On each occasion the Bûngi claimed that they drove the Blackfoot further west and that after the last raid they were too far away to make a reprisal.

A marauding party always attacked at dawn. If one war party met another from the enemy, they fought, and if the Bûngi succeeded in slaying one of their foemen, it was enough, and they returned home with honors or victory. This was considered a far more notable deed than slaying several of the enemy in an early morning attack, for, in this case, the foe were all armed men and prepared for battle. On the return from a successful war party, the warriors halted a short distance from the village and blackened their faces with charcoal. They then rode in singing laudatory songs in which the names of those who had counted coup were vaunted. When the people saw them coming they knew by their darkened faces that a blow had been struck, and they rushed forth to greet the warriors. The women, as has been noted among the Menomini, came forward with presents which they gave to the men, and for which they received the scalps in return. The women then danced the kumateiwin, or scalp dance, amid rejoicing.<sup>1</sup>

The leader of the war party, at this time or some time previously, was accustomed to take a small strip of human flesh and feed it to one of his own party. He placed it on the end of a stick and it was supposed to fly some distance to the man's mouth. The man would then eat it as though he were a bird. Joe Countois' explanation was that this was done to pacify the warrior's dream spirit. I am convinced that this was merely a personal dream obligation and not a general custom, since all my other informants denied that the Bûngi ever ate any portion of the body of a slain enemy, even the heart, although this custom was fairly widespread in the Eastern Woodlands.

In case the war party was defeated or lost some of its members, the remainder returned with flowing hair, gashing themselves with their knives and singing songs in which they dwelt upon the names of their dead. They entered the village, dismounted, and danced while the people wailed and cut themselves. It was not customary among the Bûngi to hack off their finger joints as a sign of mourning. Six months after the return of a successful war party, a victory dance was held.

Scalping was extensively practised, and, as usual among the forest tribes, at least, it was only necessary to remove the crown, although the entire scalp was frequently taken. Sometimes one of the enemy's hands was chopped off and borne home as a trophy. Although the scalps were usually

<sup>1</sup> This series, vol. 13, 119. This seems to be a widespread custom.

turned over to the women on the return of the war party, some men availed themselves of the right to give them to their fathers, or fathers-in-law, which was considered a very creditable performance.

*War Charms.* So far as could be learned, no war bundles (or in fact medicine bundles of any kind) were used or known by the Bûngi. Instead, they had personal war charms. These were made generally from the skin of some animal such as a fox, wolf, or coyote, with a slit made longitudinally in the back. These were worn poncho-wise with the animal's head falling over the owner's breast, and the tail dangling behind. Such objects were acquired by those who had dreamed the right to make and use them. The animal skin was often that of the user's dream guardian.

A war charm, which was collected at Long-claw's camp at Long Plains, partakes more of the nature of a bundle. It consists of a foxskin neck ornament, a head band of muskrat fur, red flannel, and a round stone supposed to be a thunderbolt.<sup>1</sup> These were all kept wrapped together in a little packet which was carried as a talisman. Such little packages are akin to the war bundle, although still private, rather than public medicines.

A third charm is merely a small spirit rock contained in a beaded receptacle of heart shape. It was worn about the neck by means of a braided cord and was also a sacred dream charm.

On taking a prisoner in the old days, a warrior would throw his charm regalia over the captive's head and the other members of his crew, recognizing whose property it was, would spare the prisoner. Captives, by the way, were held as semi-slaves. Their lives were often in jeopardy but they were never tortured. The Bûngi, however, were well aware that the Sioux frequently tortured prisoners and told with horror how the Eastern Sioux chief, Shakopee, had boasted before them of placing white children in an oven and roasting them alive, during the Minnesota massacre. Women were often taken to wife by their captors.

Men who were on the warpath never took off their moccasins while they slept, and kept their guns handy all night. They usually carried as many as eight pairs of moccasins and ropes of rawhide or buffalo hair to use on their stolen horses. They also carried medicines in which they steeped their bullets to make them fatal. It was one of the functions of the okitcita to count their coups at the funeral ceremony while the body was being lowered into the grave. This custom is also found among the Menomini and other Central Algonkin tribes, and will be described more in detail in a future publication on the ethnology of the Bûngi.

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<sup>1</sup> Such charms are also found among the Menomini, Potawatomi, and the Eastern Ojibway, among all of whom round stones are often regarded as thunderbolts.

## THE OKITCITA AND THE BUFFALO HUNT.

Turning from war and warlike exploits we find the next great field for the okitcita was the tribal buffalo hunt. In fact, it was true that the most important duty of the soldiers, so far as the general body of the people was concerned, was the regulation of the buffalo drive, with especial reference to the prevention of individuals from rushing ahead of the main party and hunting alone, since this rendered liable the stampeding of the herd and the consequent loss of food and privation of the entire band. In order to place the facts of the case before the reader in the best and most easily comprehensible light, the writer begs permission to digress from his theme and consider in detail the problem of the buffalo hunt among the Búngi.

According to Oyimáuwini, and this was afterwards corroborated by all my informants, the okiteita had particular jurisdiction over the summer buffalo hunt. During the warm part of the year, the entire band would wander on the plains in search of the herds. When one was located it was announced through the camp by a crier, and the men would mount their ponies and go out in a body which was in charge of the chief of the okiteita. It was always customary for the buffalo hunters to bring with them their fastest ponies which they did not ride until they came within sight of the herd.

They would approach as much under cover as possible until they reached a place where they could surround or charge the herd. When all were ready, the chief would shout a single loud, "hau," and the band surged forward. The horses were guided by the pressure of the knees, a single rope only being twisted around the lower jaw for a bridle. This was not much used. The guns were loaded with a light charge of powder, although as a matter of fact, the Indians preferred the bow and arrow for buffalo hunting long after they had rifles, for the reason that the arrow made an injury which bled more than a bullet wound, and thus rendered it more easy to trail wounded buffalo. In addition, the arrows furnished marks by which the men who had killed the buffalo could claim their game.

If any individual broke away from the band and hunted by himself, no notice was taken of his defection at the immediate time, but that night a party of okiteita would approach his tent and call him out. When he came he was seized by these men and his shirt was cut to shreds. In addition he was severely flogged with a quirt carried by the leader. When the punishment was inflicted he was then asked whether he would ever again violate custom by hunting ahead of the party. If he said no, he was freed. If he was defiant he was driven away from the camp.



If a man agreed not to disobey again and he neglected to keep his word, he was likely to be killed. At any event his punishment would be much more severe than before. In the case of a man receiving his punishment in good part and saying, "It is nothing," at the end of a few days the *okitcita* would go about the camp and confiscate a tent pole here, and a cover there, a pony in another place, and so restore his property to him, usually with considerable addition.

The influence of Plains-Ojibway customs upon their white neighbors and more especially upon the half breeds of the neighboring settlements was formerly quite marked. Alexander Ross, speaking of the annual buffalo hunt from Red River in 1840, gives the following data which I quote to show to how large an extent Indian methods prevailed in the regulation of the hunt. Of course, as will be obvious to the reader, a number of innovations have been adopted from European sources.

The first step was to hold a council for the nomination of chiefs or officers, for conducting the expedition. Ten captains were named, the senior on this occasion being Jean Baptiste Wilkie, an English half-breed, brought up among the French; a man of good sound sense and long experience, and withal a fine bold-looking and discreet fellow; a second Nimrod in his way. Besides being captain, in common with the others, he was styled the great war chief or head of the camp; and on all public occasions he occupied the place of president. All articles of property found, without an owner, were carried to him, and he disposed of them by a crier, who went round the camp every evening, were it only an awl. Each captain had ten soldiers under his orders; in much the same way that policemen are subject to the magistrate. Ten guides were likewise appointed; and here we may remark, that people in a rude state of society, unable either to read or write, are generally partial to the number ten. Their duties were to guide the camp, each in his turn — that is day about — during the expedition. The camp flag belongs to the guide of the day; he is therefore standard-bearer in virtue of his office.

The hoisting of the flag every morning is the signal for raising camp. Half an hour is the full time allowed to prepare for the march; but if any one is sick or their animals have strayed, notice is sent to the guide, who halts till all is made right. From the time the flag is hoisted, however, till the hour of camping arrives, it is never taken down. The flag taken down is the signal for encamping. While it is up, the guide is chief of the expedition. Captains are subject to him, and the soldiers of the day are his messengers; he commands all. The moment the flag is lowered, his functions cease, and the captains' and soldiers' duties commence. They point out the order of the camp, and every cart, as it arrives, moves to its appointed place. This business usually occupies about the same time as raising camp in the morning; for everything moves with the regularity of clock-work.

All being ready to leave Pembina, the captains and other chief men hold another council, and lay down the rules to be observed during the expedition. Those made on the present occasion were:—

1. No buffalo to be run on the Sabbath-day.
2. No party to fork off, lag behind, or go before, without permission.
3. No person or party to run buffalo before the general order.

4. Every captain with his men, in turn, to patrol the camp, and keep guard.
5. For the first trespass against these laws, the offender to have his saddle and bridle cut up
6. For the second offence, the coat to be taken off the offender's back, and be cut up.
7. For the third offence, the offender to be flogged.
8. Any person convicted of theft, even to the value of a sinew, to be brought to the middle of the camp, and the crier to call out his or her name three times, adding the word "Thief," at each time.<sup>1</sup>

Sometimes instead of employing the surround and charge method of hunting the bison, the Indians would endeavor to locate a creek with steep banks and a muddy bottom or margin. They would then, under direction of the okitcita, surround the herd and drive it into the ravine, where the animals would become bogged and might easily be shot. The beasts were then slaughtered at leisure, and dragged out of the muck by means of buffalo rawhide ropes attached to them and fastened to the horses' saddles. This was a variation of the winter method of driving the herds into the snowdrifts.

In cold weather buffalo were hunted when the snow was deep. Running on their snowshoes the Indians easily drove the heavy beasts into the high drifts, where they were despatched with arrows and bullets. The men hunted in companies but there was no need of the supervision of the okitcita in this season. The Bûngi never drove buffalo over a precipice or used the fire hunt on the prairie, according to all the old men now surviving.

Another method of hunting in winter was to stampede the herd down hill and out on some frozen lake. The animals could not keep their feet on the ice and were readily slaughtered. The old men said that buffalo carcasses would keep well in winter, but were emphatic that they never killed more buffalo than they had immediate need for.

Ogimáuwinini hunted buffalo from a dog sledge on at least one occasion. Traveling along he overtook a herd and set his dogs on the buffalo. He overhauled them and shot one, but the sledge slipped and threw him under their hoofs, and he barely escaped alive, uninjured but badly frightened.

In winter the great method of hunting was by impounding. Not every man could be a poundmaker, only those who had received supernatural power. The Bûngi practised the custom, so well known among the Central Algonkin, of sending their youths out into the bush to fast when they had reached the age of puberty. There the young man was obliged to remain in seclusion without food or drink for a period varying from two to four days, during which time he prayed and strained every nerve to obtain a vision in which he might acquire supernatural power, given him through the pity of

one of the gods. Some young men at this time received the right to call the buffalo when the people were in want.

When the people were starving they would approach the buffalo dreamer and ask him to aid them. Accordingly he would require them to attend an all night ceremony and assist him in making prayers and offerings to the great Powers Above for success, begging for a stormy night so that there

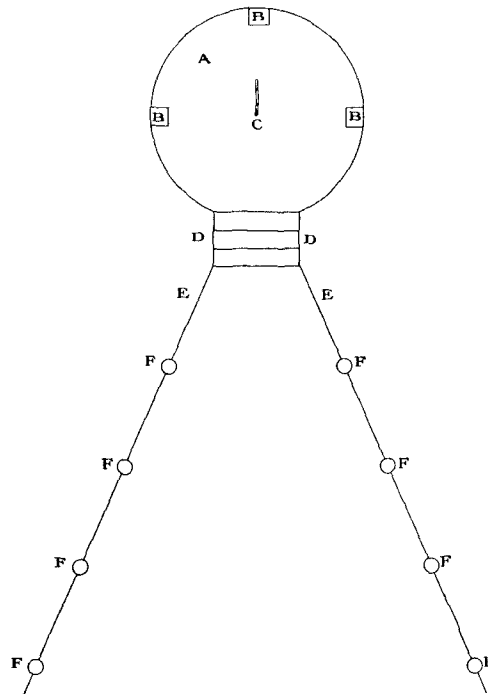


Fig. 4. Diagram of a Buffalo Pound. a, A circular pen; b, Tunnel exits; c, Pole for hanging medicines; d, Doors for the escape of the decoy; e-e, Fences; f, Snow banked along fence.

might be banks of snow on the prairie. In the meantime a great enclosure was constructed after the fashion of the accompanying sketch, (Fig. 4) which was made from a native drawing furnished by Cenuwigabô, (Sound-standing).

First a circular pen (a) was made, with tunnel exits (b). This was the pound proper. In the center was a pole (c), upon which hung the dreamer's or poundmaker's medicine. At the entrance of the pound (d-d) were openings or doors of upright logs for the escape of the decoy, which will be explained later. From the entrance spread away two long log wings or

fences (e-e) with snow banked up at intervals (f), on or behind which were concealed men whose duty it was to urge on the herd when driven into the chute. When everything was in readiness and the buffalo located, the dreamer went out on horseback, wrapped in his buffalo robe. He made his way to the herd, and when quite close to them he took off his robe and waved it crying, "Wu! wu!" *ad libitum*. This attracted the buffalo, who commenced to follow him, urged on, as the Indians believe, by the power of the dreamer's medicine.

The decoy now began to ride slowly towards the wings of the pound shouting, swinging his robe, and traveling in a zigzag course as he went. As he approached the trap he constantly increased his pace until the buffalo had well entered the wings. Then the men hidden behind the snow banks sprang up, yelping, making a great demonstration, flourishing their robes, and discharging their firearms. The herd then stampeded, rushing headlong down the funnel, and, at the entrance to the pen, the dreamer who had decoyed them so far, then urged his horse through one of the doors (d-d). The buffalo however, carried on by the impetus of their flight, dashed into the enclosure, where the Indians who had been waiting on the wall endeavored to force the foremost to mill, while the herd surged in behind.

Ogimáuwiniini claimed to have seen the bison pour in in such numbers that the last ones ran over the backs of those already entrapped and escaped over the corral walls. While the buffalo were milling, the Indians swarmed on the walls of the pen and shot such of the brutes as they desired, afterwards drawing the carcasses out through the underground doors (bbb) to be butchered.

It is said that sometimes the buffalo were driven into the pen, but not slaughtered till the next day. In such a case they were counted the night before; on the morrow it was invariably found that one buffalo had escaped.

It was a rule of the hunt to give one whole buffalo to each destitute old person and each head of a normal family. Men with large families were given more.

An interesting transference of the okitcita buffalo hunting customs is found among the Central Algonkin Menomini, where the okitcita, or to use the more common Menomini term, Nānāw'etauwūk, or police, took charge of the wild rice fields, and guarded the rice just before the harvest, while the people were gathered on the shores of the lakes, and allowed no one to trespass upon the fields until the rice was entirely ripe. At intervals the soldiers went out to the fields and examined the grain. When they had finally decided that it was ready to be gathered, they informed the chief, who ordered them to go from lodge to lodge announcing that the harvesting, would be commenced on the following day.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This series, vol. 13. 24.

The Sauk and Fox, according to Major Morrell Marston, also had a soldier band, at least that is the inference; he says: —

Except in particular cases all the Indian nations mentioned in the foregoing are governed almost altogether by the advice of their chiefs and the fear of punishment from the evil spirit not only in this, but in the other world. The only instances wherein I have ever known any laws enforced or penalties exacted for a disobedience of them by the Sauks and Foxes, are when they are returning in the spring from their hunting grounds to their village. The village chiefs then advise the war chiefs to declare the martial law to be in force, which is soon proclaimed and the whole authority placed in the hands of the war chiefs. Their principal object in so doing appears to be to prevent one family from returning before another whereby it might be exposed to an enemy; or by arriving at the village before the others, dig up its neighbours' corn. It is the business of the war chiefs in these cases to keep all the canoes together; and on land to regulate the march of those who are mounted or on foot. One of the chiefs goes ahead to pitch upon the encamping ground for each night, where he will set up a painted pole or stake as a signal for them to halt; any Indian going beyond this is punished, by having his canoe, and whatever else he may have along with him, destroyed. On their arrival at their respective villages, sentinels are posted, and no one is allowed to leave his village until every thing is put in order; when this is accomplished the martial law ceases to be in force.<sup>1</sup>

This shows that the okiteita system was fairly well known among the Central Algonkin. I have been informed by Wisconsin Potawatomi and Ojibway, descendants of Manitowauk bands of these nations, that nänäw'e-tauwük or okiteita were employed by both of these tribes.

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<sup>1</sup> Blair, 2, 163.

## THE WINDIGOKAN OR CANNIBAL CULT.

Certain men used to dream of *pägûk*, a Skeleton Being, with glaring eyes, which is sometimes seen flitting through the air,<sup>1</sup> and obtained from him the right to be Windigokan or cannibal dancers. Such a man made for himself a costume of rags with a hideous mask, having an enormous crooked beak-like nose, the whole being daubed with paint. (Fig. 5). He also provided for himself a feathered staff, like those of the *okitcita*, except that it was hung with deer's hoof rattles; moreover, he had a bone whistle of the



Fig. 5. Windigokan, or Cannibal Dancers in their characteristic Costumes.

*okitcita* type. Such a man might and nearly always did, when the band was encamped, gather to himself a group of followers, for all of whom he, and he alone, made costumes. They set up a tent for themselves like that of the *okitcita*, and, in fact, though I do not remember that any old Indian so stated to me, the impression which I received throughout was that the windigokan were regarded more or less as burlesque *okitcita*.

<sup>1</sup> Among the Menomini this same character is known under the title of *Pa'ka'*. He is a well known Central Algonkin ogre. See vol. 13, 83.

The functions of the cannibal dancers were of two sorts, for the healing of the sick and exorcising the demons of disease, much as was done by the false face dancers of the Iroquois. When a sick person's case had been diagnosed by the doctor or seer as one of infection by disease demons, word was sent to the leader of the windigokan who brought his troop into the patient's lodge where they danced before the invalid, pounding their rattles on the ground, singing, whistling, and dancing. They approached, looked at the sufferer, started back, ran away, and reapproached with all manner of grotesque and fantastic actions, until the demons of ill health had been frightened away.

When the windigokan were living in their tent, they obtained food by making the rounds of the camp and all those who cared to contribute would hang something eatable on the outside of their lodges, suspended from sticks about four feet high.

When the windigokan drew near, one of their number, provided with a bow and arrow, would stalk the offering most elaborately. He would lie down and crawl on his belly, get up, peep, crouch, and crawl along till he was very close. Then he would draw his bow at very short range and shoot at the gift. If he missed, the party passed by and it was never claimed. But if he hit it, he would call and beckon frantically to others, who would rush up and smell the point of the arrow amid great palaver and gesticulation. At length one of the band would be ordered to carry the food, and this office was performed by a hired servant, just as among the okitcita.

The party would then start off on their rounds, to the huge delight of the populace, who followed in a dense crowd to see the fun. When they arrived at their own lodge they never dreamed of taking the food in through the door, but instead threw it through the smoke hole. If anything missed the hole and fell outside they never attempted to recover it, and it was the lawful prey of any bystander, the knowledge of which kept the frolicsome crowd always on the *qui vive*.

The windigokan always used inverted speech, that is, they said the exact opposite of what they meant. If, for instance, a man announced that he was not hungry, he meant that he would like to be fed; and if one was forbidden to dance, he straightway began to do so.

The following story is told of a party of windigokan: —

There was once a camp in which there was organized a company of twelve windigokan. One day they came in front of the chief's lodge and danced there. When he came out their leader harangued them as follows: "I am not going to war. I shall not kill the Sioux. I shall not scalp four and let the rest escape. I shall go in the daytime."

The next night they all left on foot; they had not gone far before they met a

large body of Sioux, who greatly outnumbered them. Instead of fleeing, the Bângi began to dance on the prairie. The Sioux were astonished and thought they must be manitous, so they sat down on the grass to watch their crazy antics. Nearer and nearer pranced the windigokan, until at last the Sioux partisan filled and offered a pipe to them, addressing them as spirits, saying that he was on the warpath hunting for the enemy, and begging them for success. He and his party also proffered them many presents which they piled on the ground before them. The Bângi windigokan danced on, however, waving their wands, whistling, and singing without paying the slightest attention to the Dakota. The song which they sang was, "Huye, huye, haiyo." They would dance forward, wave their arms, turn round and round, lie down, rise at their leader's signal, and come on again.

At length they were very close to the watching Sioux. They then turned around towards the Dakota, pulling their guns and bows from their clothes where they had been concealed. At a word from their leader they suddenly whirled about and fired on the Sioux, killing four. The rest fled in terror, while the windigokan scalped those that were murdered. Then they began to dance away. In the meantime the Sioux, who had stopped a little distance off, were watching them, so when they had topped a rise and were behind it, the leader said, "Now my old men (they were all youths), you must not run home as fast as you can." So they fled at top speed and escaped. When the people at the home camp heard their songs they knew the party had been successful and came out to meet them.

The clowns cried to the women, "Someone must not take our scalps from us!" So the women advanced and relieved them of their trophies. The windigokan painted the faces of the girls who took them with a dark paint which they carried. The windigokan then ran away and hid, when their leader whistled they approached again, and formed their band as before. In this fashion they entered the village. In the meantime the populace deprived them of their rifles and of anything of value that they carried, for it was customary to take things away from a windigokan, and he dared not resist.

At Long Plains Nenawigabo', Piziki, and Enemoiue have the right to organize the windigokan. The latter called four others to assist him at a recent exhibition at Portage La Prairie where they paraded through the streets. From these men the data which are here presented were obtained and, after a ceremonial request and four sacred offerings of tobacco, they felt that they could not refuse when asked to make costumes and perform.

On June 1, 1913, therefore, after a little council they agreed to perform that evening, although it was very unusual, as nowadays these things are not done except for the exorcising of disease.

A man's dance was held that night, and just at dusk, when the dance was well started in the log cabin used for that purpose, the three were seen approaching. One bore a cane ornamented with owl feathers and down; the others carried green branches with strips of colored cloth tied to them. As they drew near, they paused, danced in a circle, performed ludicrous gyrations, appeared to be terrified at stumps, fled from dogs, and were overcome at faces made by bystanders, so that it took them a long time to



cover one hundred yards of prairie between them and the door. Here the sight of children, or rude taps of the drum given by the musicians of the evening threw them into spasms. Invitations to come in caused them to run away.

At last, when ordered out by some of the men, they came in, whistling, pounding their staves, and dancing, sitting on the floor, rolling around, and rising. They did not speak, but sang windigokan songs and frightened the children. They joined the regular dancers and then danced by themselves. At the conclusion of their antics, the people came forward and gave them tobacco with prayers for good luck. The clowns accepted the tobacco with pantomimes of terror. They would then pretend to smell the gift,

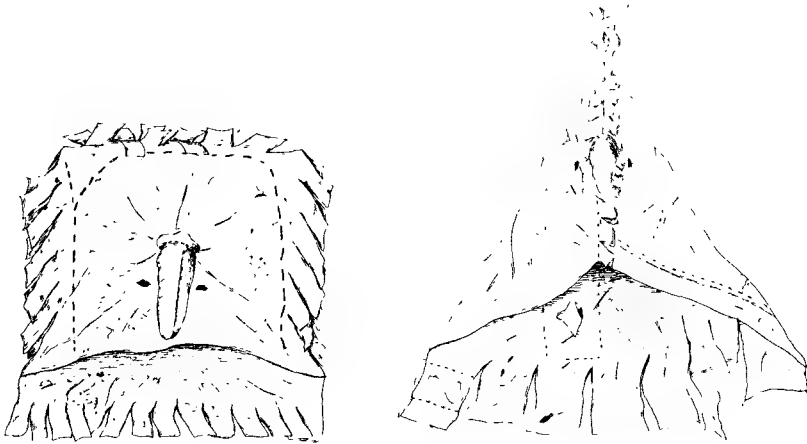


Fig. 6. Masks worn by Windigokan.

and, as each for himself was sure that it was a morsel of the precious weed, he bent backwards and forwards shaking with guffaws, to the delight of everyone. According to tradition, whatever they were told not to do, that they straightway did, thus adding to the merriment. After a short time they withdrew, but paused long enough to permit the writer to take a photograph of them (Fig. 5). The costumes are now in the Museum. They were made of discarded canvas tents and were furnished with ragged masks (Fig. 6), shirts, leggings, and moccasins, which were daubed with paint. This society is also found among the Cree and the Assiniboine.<sup>1</sup>

The name of the corresponding society among the Assiniboine as given

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<sup>1</sup> See this series, vol. 4.

by Lowie, seems to be an attempt at pronouncing the Bûngi term which may indicate that the Assiniboine borrowed the idea from the latter. The costume of the dancers is not without resemblance to that worn in the dog dance or anamowiwin of the Menomini.

It is interesting and perhaps significant to note the close similarity of the Bûngi masked clowns to the false face dancers of the Iroquois. Admission to the Iroquois society is gained through dreams and the Bûngi windigokan leader likewise must dream the right. The prime function of the Iroquois society is to exorcise demons and cure the sick, this is one of the great duties of the windigokantik. During public dances the Iroquois beg tobacco, which they smell and receive with uncouth demonstrations of pleasure, so too do the Bûngi clowns. The Iroquois dancers make excursions through the town to obtain food; this is also characteristic of the Bûngi. Both tribes wear dirty and tattered clothes and carry staves.

On the other hand, the Iroquois masked dancers do not go to war, neither do they use inverted speech, in fact they do not speak at all, and only grunt. They do not, so far as I know, possess a special lodge, their masks are wooden, their rattles are of tortoise shell.

But tortoise shell rattles might be difficult to obtain on the plains, and perhaps, likewise, wooden masks. The use of a special lodge in the camp circle, and inverted speech, are rather widespread phenomena of Plains culture, whereas this particular type of clown, so far as we have any knowledge, has only been reported so far from three tribes inhabiting the northern Plains, the Assiniboine, the Cree, and the Bûngi. Can it not, then, be due to Iroquois influence? At the earliest times of which we have knowledge of the region, Iroquois canoe men and trappers, were engaged in business for the fur traders, in fact, Mackenzie says: —

A small company of Iroquois emigrated to the banks of the Saskatchiwine, in 1799, who had been brought up from their infancy under the Romish missionaries, and instructed by them at a village within nine miles of Montreal.<sup>1</sup>

The Iroquois are not only known to be very conservative, but they have carried the false face society to Oklahoma, where it is still kept up. The most eastern band of the Ojibway, the one most removed from the Bûngi, I refer to the Missisauga, had a false face band<sup>2</sup> quite obviously derived from the Iroquois. Of course, it must be borne in mind that nothing similar has been reported in between the two regions, and that the Menomini had a false face ceremony which, however, was rather different in nature

<sup>1</sup> Mackenzie, Vol. 2, 345.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Jones, 87.

from those under discussion. The heyoka society of the Eastern Dakota also bears many points of resemblance to the cannibal society of the Bûngi.

Before passing to dances and ceremonies it seems only proper to mention the fact that the Bûngi have a cult called Djisakid, the members of which are disassociated, but who build the conical conjuring lodge and prophesy. Either this group, or what is perhaps another, called Nibikid, suck forth disease with bone tubes. As they have generally been treated in connection with the Midéwin or Medicine Lodge, although separate and distinct from that body, I shall not deal with them here, but will await a future opportunity.

The Bûngi deny all knowledge of the Wabano cult, found among the Ojibway proper and the Plains-Cree. This group, like the Siouan heyoka, performs the hot dance, eats fire, swallows sticks, and is adept at all manner of juggling.

## DANCES AND CEREMONIES.

The two great ceremonies of the Bûngi both fall outside of the intended scope of this paper. They are the sun dance, or nipagwêcimun, which, by the way, has no reference whatever to the sun, being a ceremony connected with the thunder,<sup>1</sup> and the midéwiwin. It is unusually interesting to find here in contact for the first time the great ceremonies of the Central Algonkin and the great ceremonies of the Northern Plains. Among the Bûngi, both performances have been vigorously repressed by the Canadian Government for a number of years, yet many still living remember the ceremonies, and a considerable body of data was collected on both from participants and eye-witnesses, which, it is hoped, will be published at some future date. The suppression policy of the Canadian Government also made it very difficult to obtain information on the minor ceremonies of the Bûngi, but some data were gathered.

## SEXUAL PURITY CONFESSION.

The following ceremony I have noted first because of the importance of sexual purity in the mind of the Indian where participating in a ceremony is concerned. Before any ceremony was to be held a runner was always sent out to invite the guests some time in advance in order that they might abstain from sexual intercourse for four days prior to the function. A person who violated this taboo was obliged to appear with his face painted half black (Fig. 7). Warned by this mark, during the ceremony, the pipe bearer never passes the pipe to anyone so distinguished. Such a person might not dance or take part in the performance in any way, though he might enter and look on.



Fig. 7. Facial Painting denoting Sexual Impurity.

It was formerly the custom to call a public confession of illicit sexual

<sup>1</sup> Amelia M. Paget, in her work entitled, "The People of the Plains," says:—

"Passionately attached as are the Crees to this ceremony [the sun dance] it is evidently foreign to the Algonquin stock. While religious beliefs are common to all the tribes of this great family and are persistent everywhere, this extraordinary religious function is known only to the Blackfeet, the Western Crees and the Dakotas. *The Ojibways do not practise it, and there are no traces of it among the eastern divisions of the race.*" (p. 28.) The italics are mine. Mrs. Paget is mistaken.

intercourse at intervals. Some man, given the right in a dream to call such an assembly, gathered the people together in his lodge, where they owned up. First the elders, then the youths, and then the women. A large painted spirit rock was present, placed in the center of the floor, to render the occasion one of solemnity. The stone heard their words, and disaster overtook all liars. Men who did not tell the truth were certain to be slain on their next war party. The participants sat in a circle in the tent about the stone and were quizzed one after another by the dreamer-host. Those who had unnatural intercourse with their spouses were obliged to confess it. Once, according to Dauphin Myron, a girl refused to speak, and her father was sent for, who ordered her to make a clean breast of her sin, whereupon she confessed that she had transgressed with him.

#### THE BUFFALO DANCE.

This seems to have been merely a variant of a widely spread custom found among the Central Algonkin, the Iroquois, and the Plains tribes. Among the Bûngi, it was held to heal the sick and to bring the buffalo in times of scarcity. From the last statement I am inclined to think it may have been held in connection with making the buffalo pound.

Certain men, who had dreamed of the buffalo, had the right to get up such a feast and dance. A dog feast was prepared, and afterwards four men, wearing buffalo head caps or masks, danced while four others sang. Eight women also took part, and there was, as usual, a *skaupéwis* to fill the pipes. Each participant brought his or her own special dish, kept for this occasion.

A small boy's buffalo skin cap, made in representation of a spike horned calf, was obtained. It had been cut down from the larger buffalo headdress of the lad's father, who was a buffalo dreamer and used his outfit for the ceremony, because the child was ill and he thought the buffalo might cure the little fellow.

*Pizikiwûs* (Menomini *picäkiwûs*) was a medicine supposed to have been obtained from the buffalo. If given to a patient it would make him vomit blood caused by internal bleeding, and then recover.

#### THE PITÄWIN, OR WEEPING CEREMONY.

This ceremony is said to have come from the west, perhaps from the Plains-Cree, among whom I later witnessed it. Among the Bûngi it is said always to have been held in the fall, when it was given by a man who had

dreamed of the thunderbirds. After four days' fast by the participants, the ceremony began. The night before they finished their starving a large tent was erected, and a four-foot grill of sticks was set up to serve as a platform, supported by crooked sticks hung with feathers. On this were placed cloths, calicoes, blankets, and other gifts. Bits of cloth about three yards square were hung up thickly on the poles of the lodge.

The participants, at nightfall, circled the tent four times, wailing dismally, finally entered, sat around the wall, and commenced to sing. After a time the *skaupéwis* arose, and taking ten little birchbark cups, filled them with maple syrup and passed them about, after which water was passed. Then all feasted. After this the host delivered harangues about *Kitci Manitu*, and they ate, sang, and danced until dawn, when all was over.

Many of those who starved themselves tried to dream. Some made their horses fast with them, and, as in the sun dance, they would attach the beasts to their bodies, by cutting the flesh over their own shoulders, and inserting a wooden skewer to which a thong was attached, which in turn was hitched to the nag; often a wild stallion was chosen. The devotee then tried to lead it four times around the tent. It is said that the powers would order it so that a stallion would follow like a dog and never hurt its master nor attempt to escape, even though there were mares about. This showed that the man had dream power from the horse. Those who had power from the bison would drag about buffalo skulls secured to their persons by their flesh.

The *Bûngi* say that this "dance," is a ceremony related to, but older than, the sun dance.

#### THE MAN'S AND WOMAN'S DANCES.

The man's dance seems to be a variant of the Omaha dance of the Plains or the so-called dream dance of the Central Algonkin. At Long Plains it seemed to be a social rather than a religious dance. It was held in a log cabin set aside for that purpose in which respect it differed from the Central Algonkin ceremonies I have seen which were always held in the open. A large drum, supported by curved sticks and beaten with fur-wrapped wands, was struck by a number of youths who squatted on the ground beside it. The drum was very similar to those I have seen in use among the Menomini, Potawatomi, Ojibway, and Winnebago in Wisconsin. Feather dance bustles closely resembling the regalia used by the Central Algonkin hung on the wall but were not used.

One very different feature was the use of large fur-wrapped hoops

through which the dancers gracefully writhed their bodies forwards, backwards, sidewise, head or feet first as they chose, while dancing. This they said was an innovation introduced by the Sioux.

I was told that the woman's dance would take place immediately afterwards and probably outside in a circular pen constructed for it, but I was unable to stay to see it. Apparently it resembles the circular woman's dance of the Winnebago which generally follows their dream dance.

Among the Bûngi the dance is said to be owned by eight women, though how they acquired it could not be learned. They dress all alike, in black, and perform certain rites in honor of the Powers Above. The ceremony is said to have been originated by a very old woman at Turtle Mountain. The paraphernalia consist of a large double-headed drum, similar to that used in the men's dance, and four bent sticks to support it. One man belongs to the society and acts as drummer. The ceremony commences with a song by the eight women, the words of which warn all non-members not to take part. Then they dance, and follow this with another song, after which they retire as a group and anyone, man or woman, may join in. Later on, the eight women sing the same song and dance to close the ceremony. When dancing they remain close together.

The Bûngi hold these innocent functions at night, whereas the Central Algonkin usually dance in the day, but perhaps this is due to fear of government opposition.

#### BIG DOGS DANCE.

Wapikiniwap (White-eagle-sitting), a Saulteaux resident on the Cowesses Reserve, Saskatchewan, referred to another dance not known at Long Plains. He called it the "Big Dogs Dance" and it is seemingly borrowed from the Cree. Any Indian who had the proper dream could join but he must buy the right from the other members who first prayed to their dream guardians and told their manitous that they were about to admit a new member. The old man could not be persuaded to give a more definite description of the ceremony.

#### PRAIRIE-CHICKEN AND TEA DANCES.

Neither of these ceremonies are performed at Long Plains, where they are both known and spoken of as Cree dances. At Turtle Mountain, not far away, the tea dance is said to be in vogue among both Cree and Bûngi settled there.

## CEREMONIES CONNECTED WITH THE BEAR AND OTHER GAME.

In olden times, when a bear den was located, the hunter would approach it, saying to the bear, "I am thankful that I found you and sorry that I am obliged to kill you," promising the spirit of the bear a sacrifice of maple sugar or berries. When the bear was killed, the tip of its nose was cut off, a few little sticks about six inches long were taken and painted, using one of the bear's claws for a brush, and placed with the bear's muzzle. These were all to be hidden away with some red cloth as an offering a little later. The head with the brisket and four paws was next cut off and cooked, after which the hunter called in all the people to feast. He would pick out some worthy old man, fill a big stone pipe and offer it to him. The elder would accept it, smoke, and explain to the guests the purpose of the feast. He would then pray to the good gods, demonstrating to them that the hunter had killed the bear for food, and not wantonly. At the conclusion of his speech the guests cried, "Oh!" and fell to on the food provided for them. This closely resembles a Plains-Cree bear ceremony seen by the writer in Saskatchewan.

During the feast, the bear's nose lay exposed near by, lying amid various sacrificial offerings. After the ceremony, the slayer carried them off into the woods and hung it up in some secret place. The bones could not be thrown to the dogs, but were carefully preserved, wrapped in a bundle, and hung on a tree. No part of the bear's flesh was taboo to anyone, nor was there any taboo against bear hunting by a person of the bear gens, according to most of my informants. Dauphin Myron, however, declared that children were not permitted to eat of the bear's paws, lest they should acquire the savage nature of the brute while young and impressionable.

So far as could be learned, the Bûngi had no hunting bundles, such as are used by some of the Central Algonkin, but "medicine hunts" were held. The elders would sit up all night singing to a rattle accompaniment and in the morning four men would be sent out. Each would infallibly be successful.

## CONCLUSION.

This ends the list of cults, dances, and ceremonies that were obtained from the Bûngi or Plains-Ojibway during two visits in the summer of 1913. To recapitulate, they have the following:—

Societies: Midéwin, Okiteita.

Cults: Windigokan, Djisakid, Nibikid.



Dances and Ceremonies: Sexual Purity Confession, Buffalo Dance, Pitäwin, Man's Dance, Woman's Dance, Tea Dance, Scalp Dance, War, or Victory Dance (see p. 492) and, connected with the preceding, the Medicine Dance, or Midéwiwin, the Sun Dance and the Clowns Dance, or Windigokan ceremonies, and the Bear ceremony.

To these, Wapikiniwap, an old Saulteaux man on the Cowesses Reserve, added the following: Big Dogs Dance, Bear Dance, Horse Dance, and Ghost Dance. The latter is undoubtedly one of the Midéwin ceremonies to be described elsewhere. Possibly these ceremonies are not performed by the Bûngi proper or Long Plains division of the Plains-Ojibway.



**POLITICAL ORGANIZATION, CULTS AND CEREMONIES OF THE  
PLAINS-CREE.**

**By ALANSON SKINNER.**



## INTRODUCTION.

The data for the subjects treated in the following paper were gathered in the summer of 1913 among the Plains-Cree living on the reservations under the Crooked Lake Agency, Saskatchewan. The group of Indians concerned is part of the so-called "Qu'Appelle River Cree," and forms one of the easternmost bands of the Plains-Cree. They figure in literature chiefly in the works of Henry Youle Hind who gives some account of their ethnology.

The writer's informants were: Kenewuskwahûm (or "Four-clouds"), Spotted-one, Charlie Assiniboine, Chief Walter and Jacob and Andrew Bear. He is also indebted to Dr. Robert H. Lowie for the use of his notes on the Cree of Hobbema, Alberta, and to the manuscripts of Mr. Robert Jefferson on the Cree near Battleford. The Rev. Hugh Mackay of Round Lake Mission also furnished much invaluable material. Dr. P. E. Goddard also furnished data on some of the Cree bands at Battleford. All of these observers find the soldier societies so prominent among the typical Northern Plains tribes lacking among the Cree.

In concluding the writer wishes to express his thanks for the generous, never-failing friendship and assistance, offered by all those connected with the Canadian Indian service or missions with whom he came in contact. Particularly he wishes to express his appreciation for the assistance and hospitality of Messrs. Miller and Boyer of the Crooked Lake Agency, and the Rev. Hugh Mackay of Round Lake Mission, without whose aid the expedition could not have succeeded.

March, 1914.

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## CAMP ORGANIZATION.

The Plains-Cree encountered in the vicinity of Broadview belong to the group designated by the whites as Qu'Appelle River Cree. They lack the totemic system of the Ojibway, or at least no evidence that they had ever had such a system could be adduced. They were, however, divided into certain local bands, each of which had its chief.

Niel Osauwustim declared that these bands were exogamous, but all the others consistently denied it, saying that young men usually preferred to pick their wives from the girls of another band, since they possessed the added charm of novelty, but there was no exogamous rule or custom, members of the immediate family only being barred from marriage with each other, first cousins excepted.

Niel Osauwustim, Kenewuskwahûm, and Jacob Bear, gave the following list of bands: —

1. Omuskego, Swampy. Undoubtedly referring to the major division of the Cree who dwell in the forest, rather than one of the local bands.
2. Katepoisipi-wiinuûk, Calling River (Qu'Appelle) band. Supposed to have been the most important; also called Kagiciwuinuwûk, Loud Voices Band (or People) after their famous chief, if I understood correctly. Now called Kakiwistaihau-wiinuûk or "Fox's Band," after his son.
3. Wabuswaianûk, Rabbit Skins.
4. Mämäkitce-wiinuûk, Big Gizzard People.
5. Paskokopa-wiinuûk, Willow People.
6. Nutimi-iniuûk, Poplar People.
7. Cipi-winiuûk, River People.
8. Saka-winiuûk, Bush People.
9. Masnipi-winiuûk, Painted or Pictured People.
10. "Little Dogs," Piapot's Band.
11. Asinskau-winiuûk, Stone People.
12. Tcipoaian-winiuûk, Chipewyan People.
13. Niopwätûk, Cree-Assiniboine.
14. Sakbwatsûk, Bush-Assiniboine.

I could not understand, from what my informants said, whether the last three bands were actually Cree who had assumed or been given these nick-names because of their friendship for neighboring tribes, or bands of mixed ancestry.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Lowie, this series, vol. 4, 34, gives Cahialyeskabin, Speakers of Cree (Half Crees) as one of the bands of the Assiniboine.

In the tribal camp circle Kenewuskwahûm and others declared that the Katepoisipi-wiinuûk, as the most important band, always camped in the center of the southern arc. (This place is apparently referred to as the "center" of the circle.) And here the head chief, who was chief of that band (at least during my informants' time) stayed. The other band chiefs pitched their tents with their people, but, as a matter of fact they usually lived in the soldiers' tent.

Councils, which were made up of the band chiefs and the tribal chief, could be held in the tipi of any chief, but the decisions of the council were carried to the soldiers' tent, and the okitcитай announced them to the camp. Kenewuskwahûm denied this, and said the councils were held in the soldiers' tent. Sometimes when all the tribe was camped together, each band retained its own soldiers' lodge, in which case the announcements were made from the soldiers' tent of the main band. The commonalty camped where the okitcитай told them to. Bands remained separate or mingled at will in the tribal camp.

#### THE OKITCITAI.

An okitcитай was a man whose bravery had been proved in one of several accepted ways. These were, according to Spotted-one, Jacob Bear, and Charlie Assiniboine: —

1. Killing an enemy. This and the next seem to be the most important deeds among both Cree and Bûngi, as is also the case with the Menomini.<sup>1</sup>
2. Scalping an enemy.
3. Taking a gun.
4. Striking an enemy with the hand or a hand weapon.
5. Stealing a horse.

When a man had done any of these things and the deed was authenticated, he was automatically an okitcитай. Touching the body of a slain foe, according to these informants, counted nothing; the warrior had to secure either the gun or the scalp of his fallen enemy.

Besides these feats of martial valor, a person who impoverished himself by his generosity became an okitcитай, even though he never went to war. Not every okitcитай was a chief, but every chief had to be an okitcитай. All three informants, and, in addition Big-head, Kenewuskwahûm, Niel Osauwustim, and several women declared that women could never become okitcитай, and laughed at the idea, saying that women never, under any circumstances, went to war. This exactly reverses the statements of the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. this series, vol. 13.



Bûngi. Spotted-one remarked that the chief okitcитай might take his favorite wife into the lodge with him, but that she was forbidden to take part in the dances.

#### OKITCITAU BADGES.

The insignia of the okitcитай were: first, for killing a foe, a whole eagle feather worn upright for each life taken, but no person wore more than one, as a rule; second, for scalping a foe, a split feather.

It was considered vulgar ostentation to wear these feather badges or to carry the feathered lances, except in war and during dances, and many preferred never to wear them. Loud-voice, one of the most famous okitcитай of the Qu'Appelle Valley Cree and chief of the Calling River Band, danced naked, with black dots painted all over his body to signify that whenever bullets struck his flesh, his medicine power was so great that they flattened out and fell off. He usually wore in his hair, sticking up behind, a small stick with bunches of curling shavings on it, to show that he had been in a desperate encounter in a rifle pit. This, said Kenewuskwahûm, and later, others, was the regular badge of such a combat. The same informant added that those who had wounded (counted coup upon?) an enemy, wore a split feather, and those who were themselves wounded wore cut crow feathers in front of their ears.

Those who had stolen horses painted black horizontal marks about three or four inches long on one border of their blankets, one for each raid, and hoof prints to the number of horses stolen on the other margin. Sometimes these marks were made on their leggings, raids on one leg, hoof prints on the other. Those who had been peace makers (taken part in the peace negotiations when the pipe bundle was brought into play, see p. 537) made crosses on their blankets, one for each ceremony they had participated in. War raids were shown by short horizontal lines like those for horse stealing. As among the Bûngi, okitcитай who had grappled with the enemy painted the hands of their foes upon that portion of the anatomy by which they had been gripped. As the soldiers always danced naked in the okitcитай tent they painted the places on their bare skins where they had been wounded. This was done either in blood or yellow ochre. Those okitcитай who had killed an enemy with a lance had the right to carry a straight or crooked feathered lance. They bore no whistles, and the no-flight idea seems wanting.

The okitcитай lodge or "soldiers' tent" was usually pitched in the center (on the south side) of the camp circle. It was a long lodge made of several tipis put together. In it the soldiers abode, and there was the headquarters

of the band chief, or, in a tribal encampment, the assembled band chiefs. Jacob Bear, while a fur trader, always made it a practice to give presents to the soldiers' lodge and dwell there when trading in any village, because the soldiers had the best of everything and overawed intruders. When several bands were together, often each had its own soldiers' tent.

The interior of the soldiers' lodge was furnished with beaded and otherwise ornamented willow backrests for the okitcитай to recline upon, and it is said that originally such backrests were the exclusive property of the okitcитай. It was one of the privileges of their exalted position that they were supposed never to perform any task whatever.

Some person, evidence was contradictory as to whether he was or was not an okitcитай, was picked out as skaupéwis, or servant. It was he who furnished the soldiers' tent and caused it to be erected, and for this service alone he was compensated, all other tasks he had to perform free. Some of the Cree denied that the servant provided the lodge, but said that the head okitcитай struck any lodge he desired with his feathered lance, and it at once became okitcитай property. Food was brought to the door of the tent by the wives of the inmates, and delivered to the servant. He took the kettles within, and there the bravest okitcитай cut a small portion of meat for each of the others and placed it in their mouths with a six inch wooden skewer.

The songs and dances of the okitcитай were derived from some spirit of whom one of their number had dreamed long ago. The dreamer later imparted them to his fellows. During the performance of the dances the okitcитай were fanned by the skaupéwis with an eagle tail fan.

It is said that the mere presence of the soldiers' tent prevented any quarrels among the tribesmen, and my informants denied that they had ever heard of a quarrel in a camp where one existed. However, the soldiers regulated the camp and when the band or tribe was gathered, the okitcитай picked out the place where the tents were to be pitched, although I could not learn that there was any order of precedence. If any individual disobeyed, he was heavily fined. The okitcитай preserved order at the sun dance and on other festal occasions. They also selected the central pole for the sun dance structure.

#### OKITCITAI RIVALRY.

Sometimes a party of okitcитай would seize a couple of youths, strip them and force them to lie naked beside the fire until their friends could prevail upon someone who could count more or greater coups than any of the tormentors to come into the soldiers' tent, recount his brave deeds and

release the sufferers. The actual counting of his coups before releasing the victims was not required in a case where the rescuer was a person of great renown.

Sometimes when someone was getting up a dog feast, a party of soldiers would enter and count their coups. Those who were bravest would then appropriate the food, to the discomfiture of the unwilling host and the lesser warriors.

#### THE OKITCITAU AND WAR.

War was the natural occupation and diversion of the okitcитай, and war parties rarely set out without an okitcитай to lead them. A bundle of clothes and blankets was usually thrown away to propitiate the gods before starting. All the warriors carried dried meat, except the okitcитай, who only bore a pipe. He, however, had a servant who carried his food and extra moccasins.

Only those who had had propitious dreams were used as scouts. They bound grass on their heads, like the Bûngi, in order to conceal them when stalking the enemy. They often disguised themselves in blankets or wolf skins, and signalled each other by howling. There were always two scouts for each war party. Scouts loved to play practical jokes on the war party, or on the home camp.

Mrs. Paget says: —

Sometimes a scout, coming upon friendly Indians, would wait until nightfall before approaching them, and without any warning would throw a stone into the middle of the encampment; whereupon every dog in the camp would set up the most hideous yelps and barkings, to the alarm of all the Indians. In a moment every brave would rush for his own particular pony and be prepared to do or die, when from the distance they would be greeted by some joecular remark in their own tongue from the author of the alarm. Perhaps they would be informed that the Blackfoot nation was sound asleep many hundreds of miles away, and that the speaker was very sorry that his sneezing had been mistaken for a fusillade of the enemies' guns, and in conclusion the speaker would remark that he was delighted to join a band of Indians who slept so lightly, as he was particularly in need of a few nights' rest at the time, and would be happy to leave the watching for the enemy to them. But, as stated before, this Indian would surely be paid back in full for his trick.<sup>1</sup>

In fighting sometimes one okitcитай would rush out ahead of his party toward the enemy, fling his knife down so it stuck in the ground, and fight beside it. A rival soldier would then rush out a little farther and do the same. Then the first would outdo him, and so on.

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<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Paget, 135-136.

Sometimes, according to Kenewuskwahûm, a small war party would set out armed only with feather-ornamented double-edged knives. They would go forth at night, singing: —

He yai yewe  
Heyauwutcnitawe  
He yu he he  
N'yoh, etc.

Before they left they would make a big fire and the leader, stripping, would stand in it (fire-walk?) without injury. When he came out the others would cut willows, and line up to make him run the gauntlet. He was beaten on his bare skin without mercy. At the conclusion of these ordeals he would prophesy what success the party would have: how many of the enemy they would kill, and where the foe would be encountered. How many horses they would capture was also announced. If the prophet saw a dark cloud, it meant death to himself or some other member of the party, even if success attended the raid.

Sometimes an okiteitau leader would be approached by the people bearing gifts, and asking him to take out a party. He would accept and when the party had camped twice after leaving the soldiers' tent, he would spread out the gifts and sing, in part as follows: —

Hai yi ye ye ye  
Hai yi ye ye  
Hai hi hi hi ye.

The others kept silent, and when the leader was through, he would prophesy, perhaps as follows, in an oracular manner. "If we meet them we will kill none. If we pass them we will kill many."

A man on his first war party was servant to the others and cooked for them. It was customary for the warriors to eat raw buffalo liver when they had killed a bison, but the novice could not partake until the leader had blackened it with charcoal and presented it to him. He was obliged to have the leader split and blacken all marrow bones for him. He might not scratch his own head, and had to ask another to do it for him with a stick. On a war party all meat was roasted on spits before the fire. It was a perilous task, and had to be done carefully lest the enemy catch the party at it.

Although the mother-in-law and father-in-law taboos were formerly very strong, there was one occasion when they might be temporarily lifted. When a man returned from a successful raid, he blackened his face with charcoal and went directly to his parents-in-law, told them what he had done, gave them part or all of his spoils, and, beginning with his father-in-law, blackened their faces. This was a great honor to them.

In former times it was taboo to ask a Cree for his name, and no man ever mentioned his own name except when boasting of his coups, especially on the return of a war party. On such an occasion he might repeat the story of his exploit and add: "I am So-and-so, and that is the way I am accustomed to do!"

#### THE OKITCITAU AND THE BUFFALO HUNT.

One of the most important phases of the work of the okitcитай was the regulation of the buffalo hunt. In those days the okitcитай of the head tent would choose two or four of their men, taking those who had swiftest horses, to scout for buffalo. The scouts reported to the chief of the leading band who in turn told the okitcитай who announced to the camp that buffalo had been sighted, and what the chief's orders were. Announcements were made by the servant of the okitcитай.

If the camp was ordered to pursue the buffalo and for any reason any families did not wish to move with the rest they prepared some fine food and brought it to the door of the soldiers' tent with the request that they might remain behind. This was granted cheerfully. The same procedure was demanded of those who wished to turn back on the march. Likewise a destitute person would bring food to the tent and beg for assistance. The okitcитай would then go through the camp levying on everyone until all the needs of the sufferer were supplied.

I propose to give two descriptions of the buffalo hunt. The first received from Spotted-one, assisted by Jacob Bear and Assiniboine; the other from Four-clouds, whose father had been a noted poundmaker. In the former case it will be observed that the narrators deny the uses of medicines, making the procedure unduly simple. The latter affirms them, from his better knowledge.

The warriors on their very fast buffalo horses would steal up on the buffalo and surround them. Then, at the shout of command from the chief, they would encircle the herd, get it to milling, and ride in and shoot the animals, especially with bows and arrows. After the hunt, the meat was taken and apportioned equally, so that all the old and poor were provided for.

When a large band was encamped individual hunting was not permitted for fear of stampeding the herds. It was one of the chief functions of the okitcитай to prevent this. A man who violated the rule would have his property destroyed and his tent torn to ribbons. The punishment was particularly severe in case he resisted either by word or action, but if he took

the penalty quietly, or laughed good-humoredly, within four days his property was restored in greater abundance and better quality than ever. It is said that hunting buffalo by burning the grass was impossible, as the buffalo grazed it down too closely.

Impounding was frequently resorted to. In describing the procedure, Spotted-one and Jacob Bear chose as typical a famous pound near Moose Jaw. A long funnel-shaped entrance was made by setting up bundles of willows about fifty yards apart, and, at various places along the line snow-banks were constructed behind which the watchers lay during the drive,

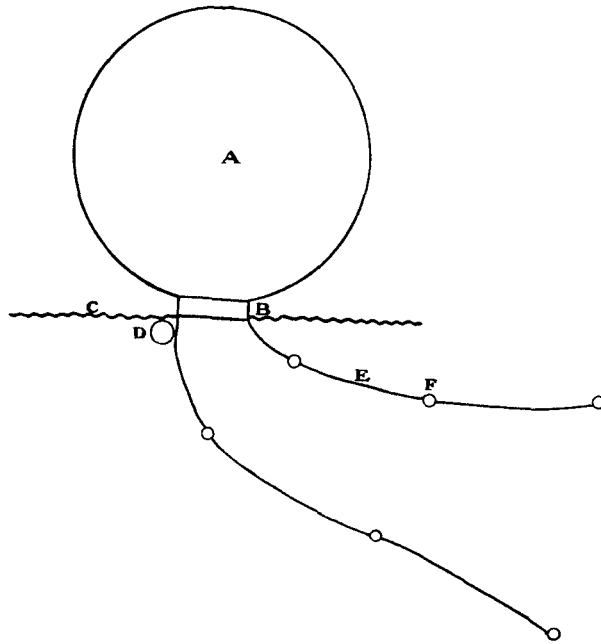


Fig. 1. Diagram of Buffalo Pound at Moose Jaw. *a*, Circular pen; *b*, Gate; *c*, Bluff; *d*, Escape for decoy; *e*, Funnel-shaped entrance; *f*, Watchers.

and observed the progress of the hunt through peepholes. This funnel ran along the top of a bluff, and suddenly turned at right angles over the edge, where there was a steep drop. Just at the angle a low embankment was built, and at the foot of the bluff a gate four feet high was constructed. This gate was at once low enough for the buffalo to spring over on their mad descent of the bluff, and too high for them to leap back in attempting to escape. Beyond this entrance was a solidly constructed circular pen built of logs to a height of seven feet or thereabouts. (Fig. 1.)

When it was desired to make a capture, a certain man was selected from among the few who had the ability to call the buffalo. Spotted-one, Jacob Bear, and Assiniboine, all denied that these people carried medicine or were persons endowed with dream powers, but explained that certain persons seemed to be able to call to the buffalo and get them to follow them without supernatural help.

The buffalo caller would approach the herd cautiously in an oblique direction, and when he had succeeded in attracting the attention of the bison he would stop, generally about thirty or forty yards away. The caller would then cry out, "Heh! heh! heh!" and slowly retreat on a zigzag course. The buffalo would begin to follow, and the caller retired until he had reached the mouth of the funnel and the herd had entered. Here he would make his escape to one side, (d), and the watchers behind the snow-banks would spring up and shout to stampede the herd. The bravest men were stationed at the angle, for here the buffalo were likely to overflow the banks and overwhelm the hunters. This was usually prevented by these watchers who stood up and held their blankets waist high, twitching them a few inches to right or left alternately and calling, "Ha! ha! ha!"

When the herd was run into the pound it was started milling, and this the Indians said was always a rush from east to west, or as the sun travels. These Cree had not heard of the Bûngi tradition that one buffalo escaped no matter how carefully the pound was watched. They denied that there was any central pole in the pound supporting medicine, and declared that there was no stone in the middle and no singer seated there to lure on the bison.

At the conclusion of the slaughter of the impounded buffalo, the tongues of the beasts were cut out and given to the men who had labored in the construction of the pound, and to the caller. The rest was equally distributed throughout the band.

The following information was obtained from Kenewuskwahûm (Four-clouds) whose uncle, Loud-voice, was a poundmaker. Four-clouds has seen all the features mentioned. His story is quite different from that of the mere hunters, Spotted-one, Assiniboine, and Jacob Bear.

The pound was made of logs driven firmly in the ground in a circle. (Fig. 2). There was an entrance gate (b) as described elsewhere and under it was placed a spirit rock and a buffalo skull, flanked by two crooked sticks from which were hung eagle feathers (c). In the center (d) was a pole with medicine tied on it, and at the rear were two exits for carrying off meat, and as a way of escape for persons who happened to be in the pound when the buffalo entered. Sometimes when the people were camping by a pound all winter, they found it too small for their needs, and were obliged to enlarge

it by piling up the buffalo meat already dried or frozen to make new bounds. "Meat Pound," in Saskatchewan, was a well-known trap named from this custom.

When the pound was ready, the maker approached the shrine and sang songs for the buffalo. He first laid his pipe before him and smudged it with sweetgrass. Then he raised the bowl of his pipe to the level of his forehead, offering the mouthpiece to the Powers Above. Then he reversed it and turned the bowl, pointing the mouthpiece in all directions, that all the gods might smoke. All this time he prayed. Then he laid down the pipe and

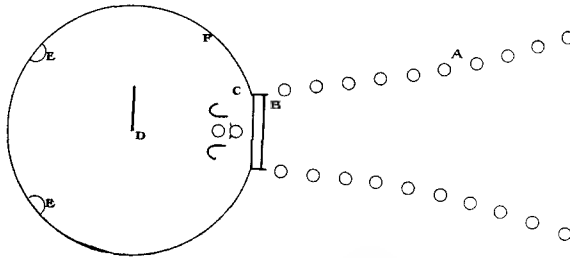


Fig. 2. Diagram of a Buffalo Pound, according to Four-clouds. *a*, Fence; *b*, Entrance gate, *c*, Spirit rock, buffalo skull, and sticks hung with eagle feathers; *d*, Pole for offerings; *e*, Exits for carrying out the meat; *f*, Enclosure.

began to sing. There were two kinds of buffalo, i. e., the black ones that could stand up and run, symbolized by the pipestem; and the white ones, like a robe, symbolized by the pipe bowl. There was a song for each variety. The first song is:—

"Pity my children, my men, and all my camp. Give me buffalo!" The second song was merely a prayer to the Gods Above (*Gitce manitu*) for a general blessing.

During the first song the poundmaker held up the pipestem; during the second he raised the bowl aloft. He then laid his pipe aside, and sang a third song which was merely: "aheyeye haiye" (repeated a number of times). After this came a fourth song. The meaning of these songs was probably magical, as no satisfactory explanation was obtained.

In the meantime a feast of meat and saskatoon or chokecherry soup, had been provided. The poundmaker caused this to be eaten, then whistled on a bone whistle and set forth with a companion. When near the herd he withdrew to a hill and waited until his companion went forward, located them and reported. Then he went to the herd and called them as before described.

When the buffalo were in the pound they were not killed at once. They were first caused to mill, and the poundmaker, from a coign of vantage on



the wall, puffed smoke on each individual as it went by, asking it not to hurt any of its slaughterers. When this had been done he gave the order for the killing to commence, and the shooting was done only with bows and arrows, as it would have been dangerous to the other Indians if rifles were used.

Sometimes the poundmaker did not leave the pen when the buffalo arrived, but stayed behind, standing at the foot of the medicine post to consecrate the buffalo with incense from his pipe as they passed. They never hurt him because of his powers; instead they often came to him and licked him. If one of the herd acted unruly, refused to mill, and turned against the tide, the poundmaker spoke to it without raising his voice, requesting it to go in the proper direction, and it would obey. When impounded late in the afternoon the buffalo were not killed till the next day. They were counted and one always escaped.

Joe Countois added that sometimes buffalo were called by a man who sat inside the pen instead of going out to meet them. He was usually an ordinary man without medicine power. A painted spirit stone was usually placed in the center of the pound at the foot of the pole, and offerings of cloth were hung on it. Henry Youle Hind, (355-359) gives an animated description of the impounding of buffalo by the Qu'Appelle River Cree which agrees in every important detail with that of Four-clouds.

In winter the herds were also surrounded by hunters on snowshoes, who endeavored to overtake the buffalo as they floundered about in the drifts and shot them with arrows. The buffalo were sometimes driven out on the ice and slain in the following manner. Where a point jutted out into a lake, the Indians would make a semi-surround and force the bison down the point on to the ice where they would fall and break their legs or hips, and were so generally helpless and slipped about so that they were readily slaughtered. This was called a "wolf pound," and was so called because the Indians say they first learned to do this by watching the wolves, who made a ready prey of the bison when they got them on the ice.

A variant of this scheme consisted in driving the buffalo out on thin ice where they broke through and were drowned en masse. The cold water preserved their bodies in primitive cold storage so that they were fit to use in the spring.

Individual hunters, off by themselves, usually crawled up to the herds and picked off such beasts as they selected. Sometimes ingenious subterfuges were resorted to in order to lure the buffalo within range. Jacob Bear and a companion hit upon the following device, which may have been generally known. Approaching the herd the other Indian disguised himself in a buffalo robe, got on all fours, and imitating a calf, began to bleat

pitifully, while Jacob, muffled in a white blanket to look like a wolf, pretended to attack him. This brought the buffalo to the succor of the supposed calf and gave the hunters an opportunity to shoot. This was on the Qu'Appelle River.

### THE WETIGOKANŪK.

Four-clouds said that when the people were all camped together someone might announce that he would make a wetigokan dance, so a tent was set up in the center of the camp, apparently in imitation of the soldiers' lodge, and before it was placed a rod thickly hung with antelope hoofs or dewclaws. Then the maker of the ceremony, who was always a man who had dreamed the right to do so, set about making for himself a suit of grotesque ragged clothes and a mask with very long nose and small eyes and mouth. When this costume was completed he donned it and began to sneak about the camp peeping into the lodges. If he found a man at home he would enter and point at him with his staff, and that man was then obliged to arise and join him. Many men fled, when it was bruited about that so-and-so was out looking for associates, for many did not care to join. Often as many as ten were members.

The wetigokan, unlike the okitcитай, did their own cooking in their tent. When they needed food they would set off on foot looking for buffalo. If they shot any game they would dance up to it, indicating fear at intervals. When they reached it they would dance about it four times before butchering it. Once, according to Four-clouds and Spotted-one, a party of wetigokanŭk were hunting when the enemy surprised them. The enemy rushed up and fired, missing them, but the wetigokanŭk kept right on dancing with their weapons concealed. The enemy began to think these strange apparitions were manitu, and came close to watch, whereupon the leading wetigokan said to his men, "Don't shoot!" So they drew their guns and fired, killing one of the foe. The rest fled precipitately. The clowns then danced up to the body of the foe with their usual exhibition of fear, scalped it, cut it up, and packed it home.

The wetigokanŭk, following their leader, would go about camp where the buffalo meat was being dried on racks. The leader would stalk some of the best meat, and calling one of his ragamuffins to him, would point it out, saying in a stage whisper, "There is a fine fat buffalo." The clown with absurd pantomime would stalk the meat, and when very close would shoot at it. If he hit it he would fall over backwards in surprise and terror. If

he missed twice, they passed on and never even attempted to recover the arrows.

A great crowd usually followed these callithumpians in order to see the fun. Four-clouds said that the Indians would even leave a sun dance to enjoy the sport if there were wetigokanûk in camp. When the masqueraders had reached their tent the leader stuck up the hoof wand among the poles on the top of the lodge and they began to try to throw their meat in through the smoke hole. If they missed, the people took it, for they never tried to recover it. Spotted-one said that sometimes they would turn and without warning pitch the meat at the heads of the bystanders.

Inverted speech was a prominent feature. The leader always conjured his men to do the exact opposite of what he wanted. If he told them not to dance they fell to dancing at once. When they had meat the leader said grace as follows. "Great spirit, don't treat these old people (they were all youths) well. Don't feed them again." When called upon to scare disease devils out of a sick person, friends of the patient would often come to them with presents and beg them to stay away, saying, "Don't let our friend get well, tell him to die at once." They would come in, dance, and the leader would harangue as follows: — "This sick one will die," which was a sure means to secure his recovery.

Spotted-one said that when the wetigokanûk were feasting in their lodge the leader would cut up the meat and throw each man's share at him. I understood he would try to throw it in his mouth, in absurd imitation of the okitcitau. Of course, the mask wearers couldn't see very well, and if they missed the morsel four times they had to go hungry. Spotted-one said also that the wetigokanûk were men of great bravery. He declared that they did not shoot at the meat outside, and that they never went to war alone. He was probably wrong in the first of these statements, as everyone else told of the imitation buffalo hunt.

It will be observed that the Saulteaux (Bûngi) organization is very similar, and the Cree say that the Assiniboine clowns were the same as theirs.

## DANCES AND DANCING ORGANIZATIONS.

It is said that all these dances and organizations were founded by men who dreamed that they had visited some supernatural person or animal, and obtained the characteristic formulae and paraphernalia, anyone might join who asked or who was asked. These dances and organizations were as follows: —

The Wetigokanúk, or Cannibal Dancers, already described elsewhere.

The Buffalo Dancers.

The Prairie-Chicken Dance.

The Bear Dance.

The Horse Dance.

Mistuatimuk, or Big Dogs (found only at Touchwood Hills).

Round Dance (resembles Sioux Omaha and Central Algonkin Dreamers).

Throwing or Giving Away Dance.

To these may be added the scalp dance and open-end tent dance recorded by Mr. Robert Jefferson.<sup>1</sup>

## BUFFALO DANCE.

The buffalo dance was held in order to secure an abundance of buffalo, not to cure the sick, as is the case in many other tribes. At the Crooked Lake Reserves it has not been held for a long time, owing to the fact that the old men who "owned" it are now all dead and their paraphernalia have been buried with them. The men wore masks of bull hide completely covering the head and the women participants had similar masks of cowskin. These masks were made from the entire head of the buffalo. The dancers imitated the action of the buffalo, bellowing, stamping, and hooking the ground. Mrs. Paget, who was probably an eye-witness of such a dance, says: —

The Buffalo Dance was a very peculiar one, and was indulged in by very few of the Indians. Those taking part in it would paint or colour all their bodies with red clay, and would wear a buffalo head or mask, which had been skinned and dried, with horns complete, and which looked wonderfully natural; into their belts at the back they would stick the tail of a buffalo, and around their ankles they wore strips of buffalo hide. The very heaviest part of the fur, taken from the boss or hump, was

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. F. E. Peass, in the *Museum Journal*, University of Pennsylvania, Sept. 1912, gives a similar list for the Cree of Montana.

used for these anklets. In their hands the dancers carried long spears, decorated with buffalo tails, and coloured strips of dressed buffalo-skin. The dancers were formed in a very large circle, but not confined to it, in the centre of which stood a young boy and girl, holding in their hands a small vessel containing some kind of medicine. These children would be kept standing for hours at a time while the Indians danced around them; and as the dancers could sit down and rest between intervals of singing and drumming, they never seemed to realize how very tired the two youngsters could become, or if the day was very hot, how harmful it was for them. Upon the last celebration of this dance at Fort Qu'Appelle, the little girl fainted before the ceremony was finished.

The Indians taking part in it would jump up as soon as the musicians started their singing and drumming, and after running around all or part of the circle, would dance about as long as the music lasted; as soon as it stopped they would sit down and rest. This was the most animated and interesting of all the dances. The Indians, daubed with the rusty-red clay, bearing their grotesque and hideous masks, and armed with long spears from which flaunted coloured streamers, rushed hither and thither, charging the spectator as if an infuriated buffalo were about to impale him upon his horns, and, with the cessation of the drumming, sank exhausted to the ground. The airs the musicians sang for this dance were really very tuneful, and were an inspiration to the dancers.<sup>1</sup>

#### PRAIRIE-CHICKEN DANCE.

This dance, performed by both men and women is another mimetic ceremony in which the actions of breeding prairie-chickens, which do dance in company while courting, are reproduced. The Indians strut and hop in ludicrous fashion just as the birds do. It is a religious ceremony the nature of which was not learned. It has a dream leader. To the preceding data, Dr. Robert H. Lowie adds some information obtained at Hobbema, Alberta. Only men danced, generally in the summer, one man dancing at a time, the ceremony ending at sunset. Both men and women sang. The head dancer wore a fringed leather shirt and an eagle cap was donned by each dancer in turn. Small hand drums were used, those seen being painted with red circles with radiating lines in the center to represent the sun. A big lodge was erected for the performers.

#### BEAR DANCE.

This dance is still performed every year and it will be noted that a similar ceremony is known to the Eastern Cree.<sup>2</sup> It is done to obtain the good will

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<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Paget, 48-50.

<sup>2</sup> Skinner, this series, vol. 9, 40.

of the bears and as a prayer for their assistance in obtaining long life. The dancers are dressed entirely in bearskins, and imitate bears. Others wear bear masks. Some represent hunters and shot them.

#### HORSE DANCE.

No information could be obtained about this ceremony. It is, presumably, like the others, a mimetic dance to obtain increase of the herds.

#### BIG DOGS DANCE.

This dance is not held at any of the reserves under the Crooked Lake agency, but is said to be in vogue at Touchwood Hills. The dancers carry bone whistles and little painted sticks with beaded streamers and brass jinglers pendant from them. They wear crow feathers on their heads. They all carry little rattles and Four-clouds adds they also carry a drum. The chorus of their characteristic song is: —

“Hai ye! hai ye! hai ye! hai ye! Yuue!”

In the case of all the other dances this society was founded by a man who dreamed the rite. He went somewhere during his vision and was there taught.

#### ROUND DANCE.

This is a very popular performance in which all take part. As the name implies, the participants dance in a circle about or near a large drum. The men and women dance at separate intervals. The men deck themselves with bells and beads, some carry decorated hoops through which they squirm with many contortions without ceasing to dance. The singing is done by the drummers, who carol in high pitched nasal tones. The women wear circular feather bonnets and headdresses bearing buffalo horns during the dance. It seems to be a modification of the Sioux “Omaha” and Central Algonkin “Dream” or “Religion” dance. The steps are unlike the Central type, and resemble those in vogue among the Saulteaux at Long Plains. The Saulteaux, who also use the hoop, which, by the way is foreign to the Central Algonkin, claim that this idea was introduced by the Sioux from whom they got the dance. The dance is called “powowing” by the whites, and is very popular among both boys and girls at the Round Lake Mission, who, though forbidden, do it constantly in secret in the

woods, where I have several times seen and joined them. A feature seems to be the calling out of young men to kiss the girls who are dancing, for which they receive a little present. There seems to be an organization with singers, servant, etc., as among the Saulteaux.

#### THROWING-AWAY DANCE.

Another dance, tabooed by the government is called the "Throwing-Away" or "Giving-Away" dance, and is not the property of an organization. As the proceeding was interdicted it was hard to persuade any of the Indians at the Crooked Lakes agency to speak of it except to say that it was a form of sacrifice to please the Great Spirit. Mrs. Paget says: —

There were other dances of no real importance, which any Indian could begin — for instance, the "Giving-away Dance," which would be started by some Indian who happened to have something he wished to give to some friend of his. He would take a small flat drum, and with his hand beat an accompaniment to a song, the words of which would mean that the present he was giving was the very best of its kind to be had, was new and was very useful. The recipient would have to give something in exchange, and in a little while almost every Indian in the camp would be seen bobbing up and down to the time of the beating of the drum and the song of the "Giving-away Dance."

The Indians have a keen sense of humour, and many of them would make up the most ridiculous words in praise of some article they were giving away, and thus cause no end of amusement to the onlookers. To such an extreme was this dance carried at times, that some of the Indians would give away almost everything they possessed, so that it was a positive blessing when rain came and put a stop to it.<sup>1</sup>

Of this ceremony, Mr. Robert Jefferson in an unpublished manuscript in the possession of the museum dealing with the Cree near Battleford, says: —

Another religious ceremony of the Cree Indians, which also takes the form of a dance is the "mah-tah-nit-toowin," a word which is untranslatable. The nearest that can be got to it is: "a passing of something to each other." The man who is competent to "make" this dance must be an adept at all weather practise, and familiar through his visions with the little demons called "Pah-gat-koo-suk."<sup>2</sup> These are supposed to be ghosts of a mischievous type, surprising people in the scrub, apparently with the sole object of frightening them. They are not given to showing themselves, but manifest their whereabouts by whistling. They are, however, described as small skeletons and they inhabit bushy places. Indians wandering round at night exhibit an almost childish fear of these little goblins on account of the misfortune they can bring, and to propitiate them is observed the ceremony of the "give-away" dance, as it is often called.

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<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Paget, 51-52.

<sup>2</sup> The Pâgûk of the Ojibway and Pa<sup>2</sup>ka<sup>2</sup> of the Menomini.

A large round tent, taking two or three tipi covers to roof it in, is made, the doorway large and open to the north, with a rude carving of a human figure cut in green poplar, on each side of it. Outside, at the cardinal points of the compass are four poplar sticks, stuck in the ground. Each guest brings eating utensils, a big dish or kettle, and a spoon. At the far side of the tent, opposite the door, sits the convener of the meeting, with a little fire in front of him, and by his side are placed a bladder of fat and his magic rattle. This rattle is made of thin rawhide, shaped while green, but now hard and dry, with two or three pieces of metal inside it, and tied in a light handle six or eight inches long. The drum is not used in this dance. Four of the male guests are now deputed to go outside with loaded guns, each at the signal of the rattle to fire at one of the four posts. When all is ready, the maker of the dance starts to sing, accompanying himself on the rattle. Suddenly, the four guns outside are heard and the whole assembled crowd joins in the song. When it is ended, the rattle is passed on to the next man in the row, who sings his song. So the rattle goes round the circle, skipping the women on its way, and is returned to its owner. Next, some of the men take the kettles of food and ladle it out into the dishes of the company, who speedily devour it. All this is only preliminary.

The serious part of the ceremony begins with the rising of the priest of the cult and the man opposite to him. The former takes the bladder of fat, bites a piece out and spits it on the fire as an offering to the "ghosts," then waves it back and forward with both hands, feigning to be about to throw it toward the other, who stands ready to catch it. Finally, it is thrown; caught, seldom missed, the catcher repeating over and over, "I catch such and such a thing as the fly," naming whatever he needs most, as for instance, "I catch long life as the fly," or, "I catch health for my daughter," or, "I catch a good hunt." Then it is thrown back to the first man, who repeats the formula adapted to his needs. So it is passed back and forward along the lines to the end.

Now begins the "Mah-tah-hit-too-win." Any person in the community may go up to another, sing an appropriate tune, dance up and down by bending the knees, and finish by saying, "I bestow such and such a thing on thee." It is then incumbent on the recipient to dance off to somebody something of equal value. It is supposed that any balance between the value of receipts and issues is made up at the expense of the receiver's luck. So, most people want to give as much as they receive for fear that the difference may be taken out of them by fate.

For four nights this goes on, and property changes hands, briskly passing from one person to another. The tent is full of people all the time and the originator of the ceremony spends all his time there, but it is not absolutely necessary to go there to "dance off" property. Any person encountered casually may have something bestowed on him, which, or its equivalent, he seeks an opportunity of passing on to someone else. By request, one more night may be added to the time during which opportunity is given for "doing" a neighbor out of health or good fortune at the expense of worldly possessions.

The sharp ones often "dance off" balky horses or things they are tired of in the hope of bettering themselves, and the young and thoughtless have a general good time during the dance.



## SCALP DANCE.

The following data are also from a manuscript by Mr. R. Jefferson.

The scalp of a dead enemy was the first thing taken; indeed, it was not necessary that he be dead so long as he was unable to resist the mutilation. Many even survived it. A cut was made around the head just above the eyebrows and ears, and the skin taken off with the teeth. This operation was often performed hurriedly and imperfectly, in which case the next man came in for the remainder, and one head might furnish two scalps. Even a small portion was cherished. A willow wand was bent into circular form, a little bigger than the scalp, and tied fast. The flesh side of the scalp was then cleaned and the scalp was stretched in the willow ring by means of a string passed through holes in the edges. For the time being the whole thing was hung to the end of a stick five or six feet long which served the purpose of display, and was used as a walking stick.

On the return of a successful war party with one or more scalps, they halt at a short distance from, but out of sight of, the camp, and paint themselves on all exposed parts with a compound of grease, lead, and charcoal. The lead triturated, as it were, by the greased hands, the result with a little charcoal added is rubbed on the body. Thus adorned, they commence their ceremonious entrance into camp. The owners of scalps march in the middle front, bearing their trophies. The others act as a chorus, naming the successful warrior and singing the scalp songs. When the attention of the camp was attracted, all would rush toward them to hear the news. The custom was to rattle the tents of the near relatives of those who brought home scalps; probably with the idea that they were so transported with joy as not to notice the depredation. This was the next step, and all hastened to take what they could lay hands on, so that a returned warrior was often obliged to seek shelter and food in someone else's lodge. It was more profitable for a man to devote his talents and audacity to horse-stealing rather than the acquisition of scalps, and yet this latter was infinitely more desired.

The dance is a day dance and only women take part in it. Their faces and hands are blackened like those of the men. The drum is used and the songs are peculiar to the dance. All join in the tune and someone is inspired to set words that suit the occasion. In this recitative, the name of the hero is conspicuous, and then comes the chorus. The scalp wands are snatched at intervals by the dancers who walk round and round in time to the tune.

At night, men as well as women participate and the drum is used. The tunes are of the same kind. All sit round, the sexes on opposite sides. The drumming is begun, a tune started and one after another rises from the ground and promenades round slowly, inside the circle, till the singing ceases, when they suddenly stop and hurry to their places. This goes on until they get tired.

## OPEN-END TENT DANCE.

Another ceremony recorded by Mr. Jefferson, and which seems related to the Ojibway Jibai Midéwin, is the Open-End Tent Dance.

It is customary for every Cree family, like the Ojibway and Menomini, to keep what is called "the burden" relics of the dead wrapped in a bundle and enclosed in

colored, generally red strouds, or the best cloth they can afford. When a household loses one of its members by death, everything belonging to the deceased is given away, sometimes even the belongings of the whole family. This is to get out of sight all the articles in everyday use which remind those bereaved of the lost one. But some small memento is preserved and treasured. These accumulate and form the "burden." It falls to the lot of the women to take care of this, and it is faithfully carried round wherever she has a journey to make, or moves camp.

The ceremony of the open-end tent is a sacrifice, a feast, and a dance, a mournful dance. Here again, it seems to fall naturally within the province of female activity to take the lead in celebrating the annual memorial ceremony; but she must be one in communion with the spirits, she must be a dreamer, and she is generally old. The tent is made in the fall in every Indian village. It is a long and narrow structure of small poles, roofed in with tents lent for the occasion and open on the south end, whence its name. Anyone who wishes, which means all those interested in the ceremony, lends a hand in the making.

Every woman goes provided with a kettleful of food, and also takes with her the "burden." She who initiates the ceremony sits at the far end of the tent with a little fire before her. The kettles are deposited around the fire and the "burdens" given over to her by the women as they arrive. The "burdens" she hangs up. Women line one side of the tent and men the other, while young people crawl in under the flaps of the sides and crouch informally behind.

The priestess, when all have arrived, makes a prayer to the spirits and her familiar, burns a piece of sweetgrass, and throws a little of the food on the fire, as a sacrifice. Then the feast begins. Everyone has a dish of some kind, and into these the food is ladled with a cup from the kettles by a server going along the lines. A hash of meat and saskatoon berries is the favorite dish on this occasion, but anything eatable will do. All has to be eaten up; nothing must be left over, and here is where the young ones, nestled down behind prove useful. It is quite a silent feast, outside of the necessary noise of eating and clattering dishes. After the feeding is done, the priestess rises to her feet and starts a wail. All follow, and dance slowly down and back, with heads shrouded, lamenting and weeping. The "burdens" are selected, when reached in the course of the promenade, and nursed in the arms as the dancers go round and round. The priestess starts a song, a melancholy one, without words, and all take up the tune as they dance solemnly up and down the long enclosure. They stop, sit down for a while, and someone else starts a tune, all rise and dance as before. This is kept up till the approach of morning, when everybody goes home and the ceremony is concluded for that year.

There is no particular dress attached to this ceremony; indeed, no attempt at adornment, the idea is to attend with a kettle of food and the bundle of relics. The food that is thrown on the fire is fed to the spirits of the lost ones. The wailing on these occasions has reached the standard of an art, and is horrible to listen to.

#### SACRED PIPESTEM DANCE.

The sacred pipestem dance was given before going to war on some occasions in order that the harvest of scalps and horses might be rich, and at other times as a sort of sacrifice to the Great Spirit that he might cause the

earth to produce abundance of fruits and plenty of buffalo. A long lodge was made, and cut in the sod, and the ornamented stem was set upon supports in this. Then the bowl was filled and placed beside the stem. The keeper, standing before the altar prayed to all directions, and then laid the pipe bowl on a pile of offerings of clothes, etc., laid before the altar. He next took up the stem, prayed, and raising the pipe heavenward sang a song in part as follows:—

Hai ye, ye, ye (four times repeated)  
He, he he he  
Kezikomäskiniyan, etc.

As he sings he turns to all the points of the compass holding out the stem. All the others then join in the singing, and the keeper begins to dance, swinging the stem before him over his head and shoulders in a series of graceful arcs. After the ceremony the pipe was lighted and passed to the elders. They did not really smoke, but only puffed a little and stroked the stem with their hands. As soon as this was over it was carefully rewrapped in its bundle and returned to its tripod.

#### PEACE-MAKING PIPE DANCE.

Another and more important ceremony, if possible, was the making of peace, from which this medicine got its name, "the Peace-Making Pipe." When negotiations with the enemy had been opened with the sending of tobacco, the pipe keeper and his assistants held a feast, at which the pipe and its stem were present, carefully wrapped up. After the feast they set out, carrying the precious calumet. When they encamped they first held a ceremony in which they raised their arms to all the directions and prayed for the blessing of Kitci Manitu upon their undertaking. They also each touched the pipe four times.

When they approached the enemy they did so from the rear, where they were met by the ambassadors of that tribe to whom the pipe was offered. The pipe was lighted, and the following song was sung:

"Keziko mikoaski mitan," etc.

After this the enemy, and then the Cree, each took the pipe in regular right to left rotation, and each puffed four times. Certain songs were sung, and the pipestem dance was performed, after which all cried, "Hau, hau!" and the matter was then arbitrated, and the pipe really smoked.

There have been three pipes among the Cree, but there are only two

now, as the Qu'Appelle River band sent theirs to the Blood to make peace, and the latter still have it.

Andrew Bear said that years ago the Cree and Sioux made peace and agreed to suspend the sacred pipestem from a pole at their camps as a sign that they were at peace. A band of Sioux surprised a camp of Cree at Round Lake, where this sign had been omitted by mistake, and slew most of them, Spotted-one's father and two wives escaping. A war party was organized which pursued the Sioux, missed them but found a Sioux village where the symbol had been omitted likewise, and attacked it by mistake. Both raiding parties found the sacred stems when they looted each other's camps, and both were sorry, so peace was easily restored. This was seventy to seventy-five years ago.

### SMOKING TO THE GREAT SPIRIT.

This ceremony, which seems identical with one reported among the Bungi, save that it lacks the torture features, is an annual sacrifice to the Great Spirit, usually given by some member of the band in fulfillment of a vow made when some relative was ill. According to Chief Walter, the host in 1913, from whom this information was obtained in the lodge, before the function, it must be held every year, and always by a different person. No invitations are sent, but the news is allowed to leak out and all members of the band who are so inclined contribute to the limit of their ability.

The ceremony for 1913 took place during the night of June 8th, and the writer was present at the invitation of Chief Walter, the host, and several of the elders. It was an exceedingly simple procedure and devoid of dramatic elements. The rites began at sun down, and were held on the prairie. An unorganized camp clustered about the tipi which stood in the center with another tent nearby. One tent was merely used as a storehouse for the paraphernalia, and was of the usual form. The other ceremonial lodge was very large, about twenty-five feet in diameter, at least forty lodge poles being employed in its construction. (Fig. 3.) It was minus any door, and was entered by lifting the wall canvas. Between the two tents a poplar pole crowned with leaves was erected, bearing a British flag, a square of red broadcloth, and a human figure of leaves, about three feet high, with a leafy crescent in each hand.

The host was in the lodge long before dark, and just at dusk the servant (skaupéwis) bearing the four pipes to be used, and followed by four boys,

passed from his lodge to the tent, wailing, circled it once, and entered. Immediately the host came out and announced through the camp that the time had drawn nigh and the guests were to assemble.

Entering the lodge it was observed that the center was occupied by an altar about six inches deep, cut out of the sod (Fig. 3). In the middle blazed a fire, and on the east and west sides were incense fires which were constantly supplied with sweetgrass by two attendants seated by them. These men lit the pipes for the host and elders. The host filled them himself. The host's place was to the north, and to his left on the east side were a stuffed grass object, apparently representing a buffalo, and four posts about one foot high, covered with cloth. From the poles above hung calicoes and four strips of scarlet broadcloth, all sacrifices contributed by the devotees.

The participants were seated all about the walls of the lodge, the oldest men in the east, (all entered from the west), and the women together in the northwest. The host was naked, with a blanket about his loins. His hair hung loose, and he should have been painted white, according to Jacob Bear, but was guiltless of pigment. In front of him the four pipes rested on the altar on a little rack of twigs. He talked to me, saying that it was through the pipes that he would appeal to Gitce Manitu. Presently Walter arose and spoke, concluding by stretching his arms skyward in prayer. Food which circled the altar in kettles, and tea were distributed.

The next event, the opening of the ceremony now took place. The host arose, and beginning in the east circled the lodge once, grasping a pole in each hand and weeping, mumbling a prayer between sobs, until he had concluded the circuit. He then incensed and filled the largest pipe, offered it to all the gods and passed it to Four-clouds, who sat on his left. Here an attendant lit it and Four-clouds in an outburst of tears and wailing sobbed a prayer, smoked, and passed the pipe to his left. Thus it circled the lodge.

Reaching behind him, Walter then took up the bundle of rawhide rattles, consecrated them, and passed them to Four-clouds, who intoned a prayer in a broken voice, keeping time with the rattle. Then those furnished with

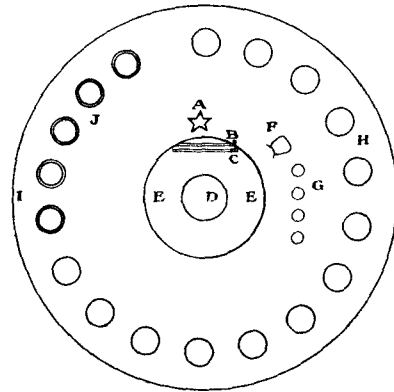


Fig. 3. Diagram of the "Smoking Tent,"  
*a*, The host's place; *b-c*, Sacred pipes; *d*,  
 Fireplace; *e*, Incense fires; *f*, Image of a buf-  
 falo; *g*, Stakes with offering; *h*, Men partici-  
 pants; *i*, Entrance; *j*, Women participants.

rattles took up the chant. During the entire evening one man who sat behind Walter hidden by offerings kept up a continuous tooting on a whistle.

This was the scope of the entire function, the pipes and rattles circulated till dawn with endless repetition. Then a crier announced the end of the ceremony which was, as can be seen, simply a prayer meeting. The lodge was instantly dismantled and the offerings carried out into the bushes and there left to rot as sacrifices. The songs and prayers related to the passing of the old days, the vanishing of the buffalo, and the dominance of the whites. They also included thanks to the Great Spirit for his present goodness and prayers that his mercy might continue.

#### SEXUAL CONFESSION.

The following peculiar sexual confession was sometimes held. A man would erect his tent over a spirit stone or a buffalo skull, and, calling the men together would order them to recount their illicit sexual relations. This they were all obliged to do, and truthfully, otherwise ill luck would overtake them. The ceremony is similar to that found among the Plains-Ojibway (Bûngi), Crow, and Blackfoot.

Once Jacob Bear's nitistawa (son's father-in-law) went to visit another band. A girl, a young widow, of that band was staying with his people, and, having taken a fancy to him, she followed him at a distance. When he made camp and went to bed, she joined him. He had, however, made a vow of temporary sexual purity and that night he refused all her advances. The same thing happened the next night, but the following evening they reached her camp. The girl told her relatives that she had slept with the man every night and was married to him. He denied it, declared that he had no intercourse with her, and refused to marry her. The next day one of her relatives called a sexual confession before a spirit rock especially to entrap him, but he was able to enter the lodge and swear to his purity, an act which those present justly considered a remarkable feat.

## BEAR CUSTOMS AND CEREMONIES.

Unlike the Eastern Cree, the Plains-Cree at the Crooked Lake Agency have no ceremony prior to killing a bear, but after the bear is slain it is laid out on its stomach with its head between its paws. A mark is made on its forehead and on the back of its neck with yellow ochre and a pile of red cloth is put on its head. A pipe is then fitted and given to the bear with a prayer for its good will. Then the pipe is offered to all the gods and the dream guardians of those present. The bear is always so treated after having been brought into the slayer's tent, where it is laid out in the guest's place. After the ceremony a feast is made.

According to Four-clouds the skull of the bear is not preserved or hung up, although he stated that the "bell" pendant from the neck of the moose is always hung up on the nearest tree as soon as that animal is slain, as an offering to the gods. The bear's bones too are cast about promiscuously, and allowed to fall a prey to the dogs, something that an Eastern Cree would not tolerate. Jacob Bear, who is an Eastern Cree, told me that he had observed that the customs of the Plains-Cree were at variance with those practised by his father in all these regards. Grizzly bears were considered so formidable that they were only hunted by parties of warriors.

The following synonyms for bear (*múskwá*) were noted. Some are the same as those used by the Eastern Cree, but the Plains people could give no reasons for this: —

wakaiuc — crooked  
okemauokusan — chief's son  
neokwataicin — ?  
nestoiuc — tired (?)

Four-legged human, is still another term.

On the evening of June 16, 1913, Neil Sauwustim shot a bear. The following day at noon the writer visited Kenewuskwahûm's camp where Sauwustim was staying and there partook of the bear feast. The skin had already been removed and was lying folded up, head outermost, in the place of honor. In front of it sat Kétikānakwûs (Spotted-one), Kenewuskwahûm (variously translated as Four-clouds, and as "Piercing-clouds-by-means-of-four-spikes-in-his-breasts), and the writer. The slayer of the bear, Four-clouds' son-in-law, and Four-clouds' son, who acted as *skaupéwis* for the occasion, sat at the right. Other guests were on the left, and the women near the door. The kettle of bear meat seethed and bubbled over a

fire in the center of the lodge. For some time, while the meat cooked, Four-clouds busied himself with preparing tobacco and kinnikinic which he cut up and mixed on a square board. When the meat was ready, the skaupé-wis distributed it, giving the lion's share to Kétikānakwūs.

When the meat was portioned off, Four-clouds made a short address, filled the pipe, gave it to Spotted-one, and lighted it while he puffed. Spotted-one, then, as master of ceremonies, for he is a distinguished old man, smoked a few puffs and then offered the mouthpiece skyward praying that the day should be propitious and that no one should be injured while the sun shone. He then offered it to the ground with a prayer that the powers of darkness should be equally kind to men, then to the four world quarters with prayers to the winds, and last of all to the bear, telling it that it had been slain to furnish food, and begging its good will and future abundance of bears. He then passed back the pipe which was relighted and passed to the rest. Next Spotted-one raised the dish of bear meat before him above his bowed head as an offering to Gitce Manitu to whom he prayed. Lowering the dish he cut off some tiny morsels of each kind of flesh thereon, and cast them in the fire as a sacrifice. The ceremonies were now over, but the pipe passed frequently. Sawustim related how he had seen and slain the bear, and Four-clouds regaled us with bear stories of the past. Each had brought his own dish and at the end each carried home some meat.